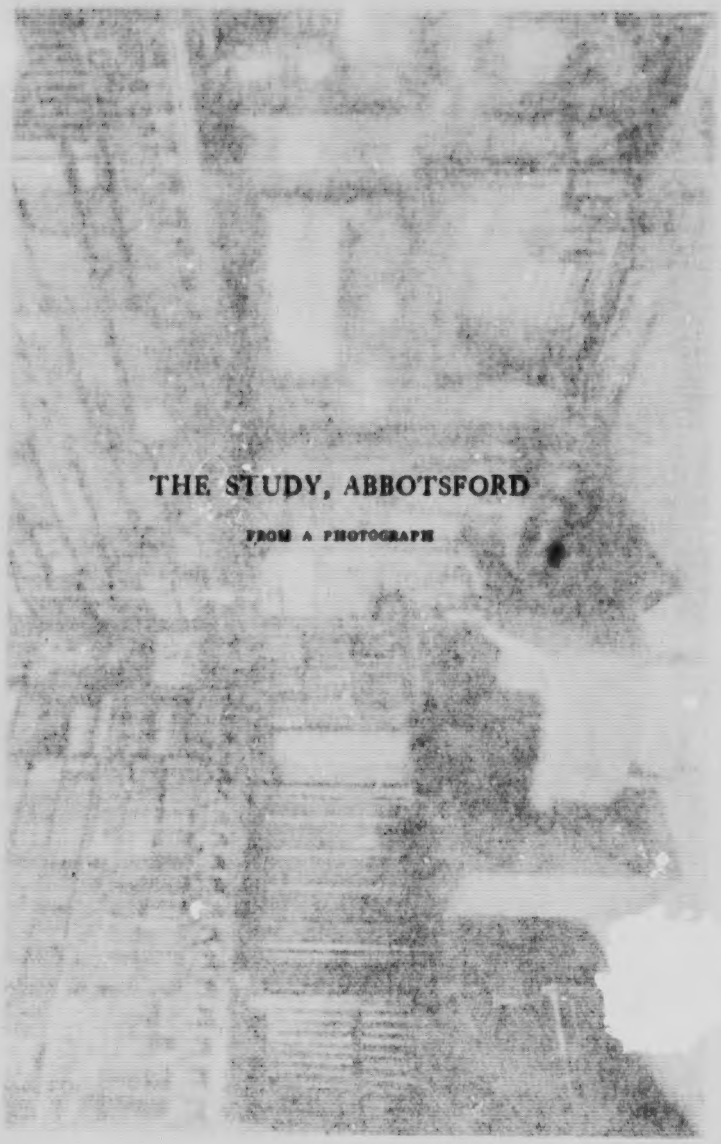

THE STUDY, ABBOTSFORD

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH

Royal Canadian Edition

The Waverley Novels

by

Sir Walter Scott

The Betrothed
The Talisman
Chronicles of the Canongate

Issued for Subscribers only through the
Cambridge Corporation Limited
Montreal

PR.5313
B4
1900

Royal Canadian Edition
Limited to One Thousand Sets

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INTRODUCTION TO THE BETROTHED

THE *Tales of the Crusaders* was determined upon as the title of the following series of these novels, rather by the advice of the few friends whom death has now rendered still fewer than by the Author's own taste. Not but that he saw plainly enough the interest which might be excited by the very name of the Crusades; but he was conscious, at the same time, that that interest was of a character which it might be more easy to create than to satisfy, and that by the mention of so magnificent a subject each reader might be induced to call up to his imagination a sketch so extensive and so grand that it might not be in the power of the Author to fill it up, who would thus stand in the predicament of the dwarf bringing with him a standard to measure his own stature, and showing himself, therefore, says Sterne, 'a dwarf more ways than one.'

It is a fact, if it were worth while to examine it, that the publisher and author, however much their general interests are the same, may be said to differ so far as title-pages are concerned; and it is a secret of the tale-telling art, if it could be termed a secret worth knowing, that a taking title, as it is called, best answers the purpose of the bookseller, since it often goes far to cover his risk, and sells an edition not frequently before the public have well seen it. But the author ought to seek more permanent fame, and wish that his work, when its leaves are first cut open, should be at least fairly judged of. Thus many of the best novelists have been anxious to give their works such titles as render it out of the reader's power to conjecture their contents, until they should have an opportunity of reading them.

All this did not prevent the *Tales of the Crusaders* from being the title fixed on; and the celebrated year of projects (1825) being the time of publication, an introduction was prefixed according to the humour of the day.

The first tale of the series was influenced in its structure rather by the wish to avoid the general expectations which might be formed from the title than to comply with any one of them, and so disappoint the rest. The story was, therefore, less an incident belonging to the Crusades than one which was occasioned by the singular cast of mind introduced and spread wide by those memorable undertakings. The confusion among families was not the least concomitant evil of the extraordinary preponderance of this superstition. It was no unusual thing for a crusader, returning from his long toils of war and pilgrimage, to find his family augmented by some young offshoot, of whom the deserted matron could give no very accurate account, or perhaps to find his marriage-bed filled, and that, instead of becoming nurse to an old man, his household dame had preferred being the lady-love of a young one. Numerous are the stories of this kind told in different parts of Europe; and the returned knight or baron, according to his temper, sat down good-naturedly contented with the account which his lady gave of a doubtful matter, or called in blood and fire to vindicate his honour, which, after all, had been endangered chiefly by his forsaking his household gods to seek adventures in Palestine.

Scottish tradition, quoted, I think, in some part of the *Border Minstrelsy*, ascribes to the clan of Tweedie, a family once stout and warlike, a descent which would not have misbecome a hero of antiquity. A baron, somewhat elderly we may suppose, had wedded a buxom young lady, and some months after their union he left her to ply the distaff alone in his old tower, among the mountains of the county of Peebles, near the sources of the Tweed. He returned after seven or eight years, no uncommon space for a pilgrimage to Palestine, and found his family had not been lonely in his absence, the lady having been cheered by the arrival of a stranger (of whose approach she could give the best account of any one), who hung on her skirts, and called her mammy, and was just such as the baron would have longed to call his son, but that he could by no means make his age correspond, according to the doctrine of civilians, with his own departure for Palestine. He applied to his wife, therefore, for the solution of this dilemma. The lady, after many floods of tears, which she had reserved for the occasion, informed the honest gentleman, that, walking one day alone by the banks of the infant river, a human form arose from a deep eddy, still known and termed Tweed Pool, who deigned to inform her

that he was the tutelar genius of the stream, and *bon gré mal gré*, became the father of the sturdy fellow whose appearance had so much surprised her husband. This story, however suitable to pagan times, would have met with full credence from few of the baron's contemporaries, but the wife was young and beautiful, the husband old and in his dotage; her family (the Frasers, it is believed) were powerful and warlike, and the baron had had fighting enough in the holy wars. The event was, that he believed, or seemed to believe, the tale, and remained contented with the child with whom his wife and the Tweed had generously presented him. The only circumstance which preserved the memory of the incident was, that the youth retained the name of Tweed or Tweedie. The baron, meanwhile, could not, as the old Scotch song says, 'Keep the cradle rowing,' and the Tweed apparently thought one natural son was family enough for a decent Presbyterian lover; and so little gall had the baron in his composition, that, having bred up the young Tweed as his heir while he lived, he left him in that capacity when he died, and the son of the river-god founded the family of Drummelzier and others, from whom have flowed, in the phrase of the Ettrick Shepherd, 'many a brave fellow and many a bauld feat.'

The tale of the noble Moringer is somewhat of the same nature; it exists in a collection of German popular songs, entitled *Sammlung Deutscher Volkslieder*, Berlin, 1807; published by Messrs. Büsching and Von der Hagen. The song is supposed to be extracted from a manuscript chronicle of Nicolas Thomann, chaplain to St. Leonard in Weissenhorn, and dated 1533. The ballad, which is popular in Germany, is supposed, from the language, to have been composed in the 15th century. The Noble Moringer, a powerful baron of Germany, about to set out on a pilgrimage to the land of St. Thomas, with the geography of which we are not made acquainted, resolves to commit his castle, dominions, and lady to the vassal who should pledge him to keep watch over them till the seven years of his pilgrimage were accomplished. His chamberlain, an elderly and a cautious man, declines the trust, observing, that seven days, instead of seven years, would be the utmost space to which he would consent to pledge himself for the fidelity of any woman. The esquire of the Noble Moringer confidently accepts the trust refused by the chamberlain, and the baron departs on his pilgrimage. The seven years are now elapsed, all save a single day and night, when, behold, a vision

descends on the noble pilgrim as he sleeps in the land of the stranger.

It was the noble Moringer within an orchard slept,
When on the baron's slumbering sense a boding vision crept,
And whispered in his ear a voice, 'T is time, sir knight, to wake:
Thy lady and thy heritage another master take.

'Thy tower another banner knows, thy steeds another rein,
And stoop them to another's will thy gallant vassal train;
And she, the lady of thy love, so faithful once and fair,
This night, within thy father's hall, she weds Marstetten's heir.'

The Moringer starts up and prays to his patron, St. Thomas, to rescue him from the impending shame, which his devotion to his patron had placed him in danger of incurring. St. Thomas, who must have felt the justice of the imputation, performs a miracle. The Moringer's senses were drenched in oblivion, and when he waked he lay in a well-known spot of his own domain; on his right the castle of his fathers, and on his left the mill, which, as usual, was built not far distant from the castle.

He leaned upon his pilgrim's staff, and to the mill he drew;
So altered was his goodly form that none their master knew.
The baron to the miller said, 'Good friend, for charity,
Tell a poor pilgrim, in your land, what tidings may there be?'

The miller answered him again — 'He knew of little news,
Save that the lady of the land did a new bridegroom choose.
Her husband died in distant land, such is the constant word;
His death sits heavy on our souls, he was a worthy lord.

'Of him I held the little mill, which wins me living free;
God rest the baron in his grave, he aye was kind to me!
And when St. Martin's tide comes round, and millers take their toll,
The priest that prays for Moringer shall have both cope and stole.'

The baron proceeds to the castle gate, which is bolted to prevent intrusion, while the inside of the mansion rung with preparations for the marriage of the lady. The pilgrim prayed the porter for entrance, conjuring him by his own sufferings, and for the sake of the late Moringer; by the orders of his lady, the warder gave him admittance.

Then up the hall paced Moringer, his step was sad and slow;
It sat full heavy on his heart, none seemed their lord to know.
He sat him on a lowly bench, oppressed with woe and wrong;
Short while he sat, but ne'er to him seemed little space so long.

Now spent was day, and feasting o'er, and come was evening hour,
The time was nigh when new-made brides retire to nuptial bower.
'Our castle's wont,' a bridesman said, 'hath been both firm and long:
No guest to harbour in our halls till he shall chant a song.'

When thus called upon, the disguised baron sung the following melancholy ditty: —

'Chill flows the lay of frozen age,' 't was thus the pilgrim sung,
'Nor golden meed, nor garment gay, unlocks his heavy tongue.
Once did I sit, thou bridegroom gay, at board as rich as thine,
And by my side as fair a bride, with all her charms, was mine.

'But time traced furrows on my face, and I grew silver-haired,
For locks of brown and cheeks of youth she left this brow and beard;
Once rich, but now a palmer poor, I tread life's latest stage,
And mingle with your bridal mirth the lay of frozen age.'

The lady, moved at the doleful recollections which the palmer's song recalled, sent to him a cup of wine. The palmer, having exhausted the goblet, returned it, and having first dropped in the cup his nuptial ring, requested the lady to pledge her venerable guest.

The ring hath caught the lady's eye, she views it close and near,
Then might you hear her shriek aloud, 'The Moringer is here!'
Then might you see her start from seat, while tears in torrents fell,
But if she wept for joy or woe, the ladies best can tell.

Full loud she uttered thanks to Heaven and every saintly power,
That had restored the Moringer before the midnight hour;
And loud she uttered vow on vow, that never was there bride,
That had like her preserved her troth, or been so sorely tried.

'Yes, here I claim the praise,' she said, 'to constant matrons due,
Who keep the troth that they have plight so steadfastly and true;
For count the term howe'er you will, so that you count aright,
Seven twelvemonths and a day are out when bells toll twelve to-night.'

It was Marstetten then rose up, his falchion there he drew,
He kneeled before the Moringer, and down his weapon threw;
'My oath and knightly faith are broke,' these were the words he said;
'Then take, my liege, thy vassal's sword, and take thy vassal's head.'

The noble Moringer he smiled, and then aloud did say,
'He gathers wisdom that hath roamed seven twelvemonths and a day;
My daughter now hath fifteen years, fame speaks her sweet and fair;
I give her for one bride you lose, and name her for my heir.

'The young bridegroom hath youthful bride, the old bridegroom the old,
Whose faith was kept till term and tide so punctually were told;
But blessings on the warder kind that oped my castle gate,
For had I come at morrow tide, I came a day too late.'[1]

There is also, in the rich field of German romance, another edition of this story, which has been converted by M. Tieck (whose labours of that kind have been so remarkable) into the subject of one of his romantic dramas. It is, however,

[1] These verses are quoted from the Author's own translation, with a few verbal alterations (*Laing*).

unnecessary to detail it, as the present Author adopted his idea of the tale chiefly from the edition preserved in the mansion of Haigh Hall, of old the mansion-house of the family of Bradshaigh, now possessed by their descendants on the female side, the Earls of Balcarras. The story greatly resembles that of the Noble Moringer, only there is no miracle of St. Thomas to shock the belief of good Protestants. I am permitted, by my noble friends, the lord and lady of Haigh Hall, to print the following extract from the family genealogy: —

Sir William Bradshaghe 2d Sone to Sr iohn was A great traueller and A Souldger and married To Mabell daughter and Sole heire of Hugh Noris de Haghe and Blackrode and had issue M. S. E 2.

of this Mabel is a story by tradition of undouted verity that in Sr William Bradshage's absence (beinge 10 yeares away in the wares) she married a welch kt. Sr William retorninge from the wares came in a Palmers habit amongst the Poore to haghe. Who when she saw & congetringe that he faboured her former husband wept, for which the kt chasticed her at wich Sr William went and made him selfe Knowne to his Tennants in wch space the kt fled. but neare to Newton Parke Sr William ouertooke him and slue him. The said Dame Mabell was enioyned by her confessor to doe Pennances by going onest euery week barefout and bare legg'd to a Crosse ner Wigan from the haghe wilest she liued & is called Mabb E to this day; & ther monument Lyes in wigan Church as you see ther Portrd

An: Dom: 1315.

There were many vestiges around Haigh Hall, both of the Catholic penances of the Lady Mabel and of this melancholy transaction in particular; the whole history was within the memory of man portrayed upon a glass window in the hall, where unfortunately it has not been preserved. Mab's Cross is still extant. An old decayed building is said to have been the place where the Lady Mabel was condemned to render penance, by walking hither from Haigh Hall barefooted and barelegged

for the performance of her devotions. This relic, to which an anecdote so curious is annexed, is now unfortunately ruinous. Time and whitewash, says Mr. Roby, have altogether defaced the effigies of the knight and lady on the tomb. The particulars are preserved in Mr. Roby's *Traditions of Lancashire*,[1] to which the reader is referred for further particulars. It does not appear that Sir William Bradshaigh was irreparably offended against the too hasty Lady Mabel, although he certainly showed himself of a more fiery mould than the Scottish and German barons who were heroes of the former tales. The tradition, which the Author knew very early in life, was told to him by the late Lady Balcarras. He was so much struck with it that, being at that time profuse of legendary lore, he inserted it in the shape of a note to *Waverley*,[2] the first of his romantic offences. Had he then known, as he now does, the value of such a story, it is likely that, as directed in the inimitable receipt for making an epic poem, preserved in *The Guardian*, he would have kept it for some future opportunity.

As, however, the tale had not been completely told, and was a very interesting one, and as it was sufficiently interwoven with the crusades, the wars between the Welsh and the Norman lords of the marches were selected as a period when all freedoms might be taken with the strict truth of history without encountering any well-known fact which might render the narrative improbable. Perhaps, however, the period which vindicates the probability of the tale will, with its wars and murders, be best found described in the following passage of Gryffyth Ap Edwin's wars:—

> This prince, in conjunction with Algar, Earl of Chester, who had been banished from England as a traitor, in the reign of Edward the Confessor, marched into Herefordshire and wasted all that fertile country with fire and sword, to revenge the death of his brother Rhees, whose head had been brought to Edward in pursuance of an order sent by that king on account of the depredations which he had committed against the English on the borders. To stop these ravages the Earl of Hereford, who was nephew to Edward, advanced with an army not of English alone, but of mercenary Normans and French, whom he had entertained in his service, against Gryffyth and Algar. He met them near Hereford, and offered them battle, which the Welsh monarch, who had won five pitched battles before, and never had fought without conquering, joyfully accepted. The earl had commanded his English forces to fight on horseback, in imitation of the Normans, against their usual custom; but the Welsh making a furious and desperate charge, that nobleman himself, and the foreign

[1] A very elegant work, 2 vols. 1829 [and 2 vol ce, 1831]. By J. Roby, M.R.S.I.

[2] *Waverley*, Note 2, p. 470.

cavalry led by him, were so daunted at the view of them, that they shamefully fled without fighting; which being seen by the English, they also turned their backs on the enemy, who, having killed or wounded as many of them as they could come up with in their flight, entered triumphantly into Hereford, spoiled and fired the city, razed the walls to the ground, slaughtered some of the citizens, led many of them captive, and, to use the words of the Welsh chronicle, left nothing in the town but blood and ashes. After this exploit they immediately returned into Wales, undoubtedly from a desire of securing their prisoners and the rich plunder they had gained. The king of England hereupon commanded Earl Harold to collect a great army from all parts of the kingdom, and assembling them at Gloucester, advanced from thence to invade the dominions of Gryffyth in North Wales. He performed his orders, and penetrated into that country without resistance from the Welsh, Gryffyth and Algar returning into some parts of South Wales. What were their reasons for this conduct we are not well informed, nor why Harold did not pursue his advantage against them; but it appears that he thought it more advisable at this time to treat with, than subdue them; for he left North Wales, and employed himself in rebuilding the walls of Hereford, while negotiations were carrying on with Gryffyth, which soon after produced the restoration of Algar, and a peace with that king, not very honourable to England, as he made no satisfaction for the mischief he had done in the war, nor any submissions to Edward. Harold must doubtless have had some private and forcible motives to conclude such a treaty. The very next year the Welsh monarch, upon what quarrel we know not, made a new incursion into England, and killed the bishop of Hereford, the sheriff of the county, and many more of the English, both ecclesiastics and laymen. Edward was counselled by Harold and Leofrick, Earl of Mercia, to make peace with him again, which he again broke; nor could he be restrained by any means from these barbarous inroads before the year one thousand and sixty-three; when Edward, whose patience and pacific disposition had been too much abused, commissioned Harold to assemble the whole strength of the kingdom, and make war upon him in his own country, till he had subdued or destroyed him. That general acted so vigorously, and with so much celerity, that he had like to have surprised him in his palace; but just before the English forces arrived at his gate, having notice of the danger that threatened him, and seeing no other means of safety, he threw himself, with a few of his household, into one of his ships which happened at the instant to be ready to sail, and put to sea. — Lyttleton's [?] *Hist. of England*, vol. ii. p. 338.

This passage will be found to bear a general resemblance to the fictitious tale told in the romance.

MINUTES

OF SEDERUNT O[illegible] GENERAL MEETING OF THE SHAREHOLDERS DESIGNING TO FORM A JOINT-STOCK COMPANY, UNITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF WRITING AND PUBLISHING THE CLASS OF WORKS CALLED THE *WAVERLEY NOVELS*,

HELD

IN THE WATERLOO TAVERN, REGENT'S BRIDGE,

Edinburgh, 1*st June* 1825

The reader must have remarked, that the various editions of the proceedings at this meeting were given in the public papers with rather more than usual inaccuracy. The cause of this was no ill-timed delicacy on the part of the gentlemen of the press to assert their privilege of universal presence wherever a few are met together, and to commit to the public prints whatever may then and there pass of the most private nature. But very unusual and arbitrary methods were resorted to on the present occasion to prevent the reporters using a right which is generally conceded to them by almost all meetings, whether of a political or commercial description. Our own reporter, indeed, was bold enough to secrete himself under the secretary's table, and was not discovered till the meeting was wellnigh over. We are sorry to say he suffered much in person from fists and toes, and two or three principal pages were torn out of his note-book, which occasions his re[illegible] break off abruptly. We cannot but consider this behaviour as more par[illegible]ularly illi[illegible]eral on the part of men who are themselves a kind of gentle[illegible] of the press; and they ought to consider themselves as fortunate [illegible] the misused reporter has sought no other vengeance than from the tone [illegible]acidity with [illegible] seasoned his account of their proceedings. — *Edinburgh* [illegible]

A MEETING of the gentlemen and others interested in the celebrated publications called the Waverley Novels having been called by public advertisement, the same was respectably attended by various literary characters of eminence. And it being in the first place understood that individuals were to be denominated by the names assigned to them in the publications in question, the eidolon or image of the Author was unanimously called to the chair, and Jonathan Oldbuck, Esq., of Monkbarns was requested to act as secretary.

The Preses then addressed the meeting to the following purpose: —

'GENTLEMEN — I need scarce remind you that we have a joint interest in the valuable property which has accumulated under

our common labours. While the public have been idly engaged in ascribing to one individual or another the immense mass of various matter which the labours of many had accumulated, you, gentlemen, well know that every person in this numerous assembly has had his share in the honours and profits of our common success. It is, indeed, to me a mystery how the sharp-sighted could suppose so huge a mass of sense and nonsense, jest and earnest, humorous and pathetic, good, bad, and indifferent, amounting to scores of volumes, could be the work of one hand, when we know the doctrine so well laid down by the immortal Adam Smith concerning the division of labour. Were those who entertained an opinion so strange not wise enough to know that it requires twenty pairs of hands to make a thing so trifling as a pin, twenty couple of dogs to kill an animal so insignificant as a fox ——?'

'Hout, man!' said a stout countryman, 'I have a grew bitch at hame will worry the best tod in Pomoragrains before ye could say dumpling.'

'Who is that person?' said the Preses, with some warmth, as it appeared to us.

'A son of Dandy Dinmont's,' answered the unabashed rustic. 'God, ye may mind him, I think! ane o' the best in your aught, I reckon. And, ye see, I am come into the farm, and maybe something mair, and a wheen shares in this buik-trade o' yours.'

'Well, well,' replied the Preses, 'peace, I pray thee — peace. Gentlemen, when thus interrupted, I was on the point of introducing the business of this meeting, being, as is known to most of you, the discussion of a proposition now on your table, which I myself had the honour to suggest at last meeting, namely, that we do apply to the legislature for an act of parliament in ordinary, to associate us into a corporate body, and give us a *persona standi in judicio*, with full power to prosecute and bring to conviction all encroachers upon our exclusive privilege, in the manner therein to be made and provided. In a letter from the ingenious Mr. Dousterswivel which I have received ——'

Oldbuck (warmly) — 'I object to that fellow's name being mentioned; he is a common swindler.'

'For shame, Mr. Oldbuck,' said the Preses, 'to use such terms respecting the ingenious inventor of the great patent machine erected at Groningen, where they put in raw hemp at

one end and take out ruffled shirts at the other, without the aid of hackle or rippling-comb, loom, shuttle, or weaver, scissors, needle, or seamstress. He had just completed it, by the addition of a piece of machinery to perform the work of the laundress; but when it was exhibited before his honour the burgomaster, it had the inconvenience of heating the smoothing-irons red-hot; excepting which, the experiment was entirely sat. actory. He will become as rich as a Jew.'

'Well,' added Mr. Oldbuck, 'if the scoundrel ——'

'Scoundrel, Mr. Oldbuck,' said the Preses, 'is a most unseemly expression, and I must call you to order. Mr. Dousterswivel is only an eccentric genius.'

'Pretty much the same in the Greek,' muttered Mr. Oldbuck; and then said aloud, 'And if this eccentric genius has work enough in singeing the Dutchman's linen, what the devil has he to do here?'

'Why, he is of opinion that, at the expense of a little mechanism, some part of the labour of composing these novels might be saved by the use of steam.'

There was a murmur of disapprobation at this proposal, and the words 'Blown up,' and 'Bread taken out of our mouths,' and 'They might as well construct a steam parson,' were whispered. And it was not without repeated calls to order that the Preses obtained an opportunity of resuming his address.

'Order!—order! Pray, support the chair! Hear—hear—hear the chair!'

'Gentlemen, it is to be premised that this mechanical operation can only apply to those parts of the narrative which are at present composed out of commonplaces, such as the love-speeches of the hero, the description of the heroine's person, the moral observations of all sorts, and the distribution of happiness at the conclusion of the piece. Mr. Dousterswivel has sent me some drawings, which go far to show that, by placing the words and phrases technically employed on these subjects in a sort of frame-work, like that of the sage of Laputa, and changing them by such a mechanical process as that by which weavers of damask alter their patterns, many new and happy combinations cannot fail to occur, while the author, tired of pumping his own brains, may have an agreeable relaxation in the use of his fingers.'

'I speak for information, Mr. Preses,' said the Rev. Mr. Laurence Templeton; 'but I am inclined to suppose the late

publication of *Walladmor*[1] to have been the work of Dousterswivel, by the help of the steam-engine.'

'For shame, Mr. Templeton,' said the Preses; 'there are good things in *Walladmor*, I assure you, had the writer known anything about the country in which he laid the scene.'[2]

'Or had he had the wit, like some of ourselves, to lay the scene in such a remote or distant country that nobody should be able to backspeir him,' said Mr. Oldbuck.

'Why, as to that,' said the Preses, 'you must consider the thing was got up for the German market, where folks are no better judges of Welsh manners than of Welsh erw.'

'I make it my prayer that this be not found the fault of our own next venture,' said Dr. Dryasdust, pointing to some books which lay on the table. 'I fear the manners expressed in that *Betrothed* of ours will scarce meet the approbation of the Cymmorodion; I could have wished that Llhuyd had been looked into, that Powell had been consulted, that Lewis's *History* had been quoted, the preliminary dissertations particularly, in order to give due weight to the work.'

'Weight!' said Captain Clutterbuck; 'by my soul, it is heavy enough already, Doctor.'

'Speak to the chair,' said the Preses, rather peevishly.

'To the chair, then, I say it,' said Captain Clutterbuck, 'that *The Betrothed* is heavy enough to break down the chair of John of Gaunt, or Cader-Edris itself. I must add, however, that, in my poor mind, *The Talisman* goes more trippingly off.'[3]

'It is not for me to speak,' said the worthy minister of St. Ronan's Well; 'but yet I must say that, being so long engaged upon the siege of Ptolemais, my work ought to have been brought out, humble though it be, before any other upon a similar subject at least.'

'Your siege, parson!' said Mr. Oldbuck, with great contempt; 'will you speak of your paltry prose-doings in my presence, whose great historical poem, in twenty books, with notes in proportion, has been postponed *ad Græcas kalendas?*'

The Preses, who appeared to suffer a great deal during

[1] A romance, by the Author of *Waverley*, having been expected about this time at the great commercial mart of literature, the fair of Leipsic, an ingenious gentleman of Germany, finding that none such appeared, was so kind as to supply its place with a work, in three volumes, called *Walladmor*, to which he prefixed the Christian and surname at full length. The character of this work is given with tolerable fairness in the text.

[2] [See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. vii. pp. 384-386.]

[3] This was an opinion universally entertained among the friends of the Author.

this discussion, now spoke with dignity and determination. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'this sort of discussion is highly irregular. There is a question before you, and to that, gentlemen, I must confine your attention. Priority of publication, let me remind you, gentlemen, is always referred to the committee of criticism, whose determination on such subjects is without appeal. I declare I will leave the chair if any more extraneous matter be introduced. And now, gentlemen, that we are once more in order, I would wish to have some gentleman speak upon the question, whether, as associated to carry on a joint-stock trade in fictitious narrative, in prose and verse, we ought not to be incorporated by act of parliament? What say you, gentlemen, to the proposal? *Vis unita fortior* is an old and true adage.'

'*Societas mater discordiarum* is a brocard as ancient and as veritable,' said Oldbuck, who seemed determined, on this occasion, to be pleased with no proposal that was countenanced by the chair.

'Come, Monkbarns,' said the Preses, in his most coaxing manner, 'you have studied the monastic institutions deeply, and know there must be a union of persons and talents to do anything respectable, and attain a due ascendance over the spirit of the age. *Tres faciunt collegium:* it takes three monks to make a convent.'

'And nine tailors to make a man,' replied Oldbuck, not in the least softened in his opposition — 'a quotation as much to the purpose as the other.'

'Come — come,' said the Preses, 'you know the Prince of Orange said to Mr. Seymour, "Without an association, we are a rope of sand."'

'I know,' replied Oldbuck, 'it would have been as seemly that none of the old leaven had been displayed on this occasion, though you be the author of a Jacobite novel. I know nothing of the Prince of Orange after 1688; but I have heard a good deal of the immortal William the Third.'

'And, to the best of my recollection,' said Mr. Templeton, whispering Oldbuck, 'it was Seymour made the remark to the Prince, not the Prince to Seymour. But this is a specimen of our friend's accuracy, poor gentleman. He trusts too much to his memory of late years — failing fast, sir — breaking up!'

'And breaking down too,' said Mr. Oldbuck. 'But what can you expect of a man too fond of his own hasty and flashy compositions to take the assistance of men of reading and of solid parts?'

'No whispering — no caballing — no private business, gentlemen,' said the unfortunate Preses, who reminded us somewhat of a Highland drover, engaged in gathering and keeping in the straight road his excursive black cattle.

'I have not yet heard,' he continued, 'a single reasonable objection to applying for the act of parliament, of which the draught lies on the table. You must be aware that the extremes of rude and of civilised society are, in these our days, on the point of approaching to each other. In the patriarchal period, a man is his own weaver, tailor, butcher, shoemaker, and so forth; and, in the age of stock-companies, as the present may be called, an individual may be said, in one sense, to exercise the same plurality of trades. In fact, a man who has dipt largely into these speculations may combine his own expenditure with the improvement of his own income, just like the ingenious hydraulic machine, which, by its very waste, raises its own supplies of water. Such a person buys his bread from his own Baking Company, his milk and cheese from his own Dairy Company, takes off a new coat for the benefit of his own Clothing Company, illuminates his house to advance his own Gas Establishment, and drinks an additional bottle of wine for the benefit of the General Wine Importation Company, of which he is himself a member. Every act, which would otherwise be one of mere extravagance, is, to such a person, seasoned with the *odor lucri*, and reconciled to prudence. Even if the price of the article consumed be extravagant, and the quality indifferent, the person, who is in a manner his own customer, is only imposed upon for his own benefit. Nay, if the Joint-stock Company of Undertakers shall unite with the medical faculty, as proposed by the facetious Doctor G——, under the firm of Death and the Doctor, the shareholder might contrive to secure to his heirs a handsome slice of his own death-bed and funeral expenses. In short, stock-companies are the fashion of the age, and an incorporating act will, I think, be particularly useful in bringing back the body over whom I have the honour to preside to a spirit of subordination, highly necessary to success in every enterprise where joint wisdom, talent, and labour are to be employed. It is with regret that I state that, besides several differences amongst yourselves, I have not myself for some time been treated with that deference among you which circumstances entitled me to expect.'

'*Hinc illæ lachrymæ*,' muttered Mr. Oldbuck.

'But,' continued the Chairman, 'I see other gentlemen im-

patient to deliver their opinions, and I desire to stand in no man's way. I therefore — my place in this chair forbidding me to originate the motion — beg some gentleman may move a committee for revising the draught of the bill now upon the table, and which has been duly circulated among those having interest, and take the necessary measures to bring it before the House early next session.'

There was a short murmur in the meeting, and at length Mr. Oldbuck again rose. 'It seems, sir,' he said, addressing the chair, 'that no one present is willing to make the motion you point at. I am sorry no more qualified person has taken upon him to show any reasons in the contrair, and that it has fallen on me, as we Scotsmen say, to bell-the-cat with you; anent whilk phrase, Pitscottie hath a pleasant jest of the great Earl of Angus ——'

Here a gentleman whispered to the speaker, 'Have a care of Pitscottie!' and Mr. Oldbuck, as if taking the hint, went on.

'But that's neither here nor there. Well, gentlemen, to be short, I think it unnecessary to enter into the general reasonings whilk have this day been delivered, as I may say, *ex cathedra;* nor will I charge our worthy Preses with an attempt to obtain over us, *per ambages*, and under colour of an act of parliament, a despotic authority, inconsistent with our freedom; but this I will say, that times are so much changed above stairs, that whereas last year you might have obtained an act incorporating a stock-company for riddling ashes, you will not be able to procure one this year for gathering pearls. What signifies, then, wasting the time of the meeting, by inquiring whether or not we ought to go in at a door which we know to be bolted and barred in our face, and in the face of all the companies for fire or air, land or water, which we have of late seen blighted?'

Here there was a general clamour, seemingly of approbation, in which the words might be distinguished, 'Needless to think of it' — 'Money thrown away' — 'Lost before the committee,' etc. etc. etc. But above the tumult, the voices of two gentlemen, in different corners of the room, answered each other clear and loud, like the blows of the two figures on St. Dunstan's clock; and although the Chairman, in much agitation, endeavoured to silence them, his interruption had only the effect of cutting their words up into syllables, thus —

First Voice. 'The Lord Chan——'

Second Voice. 'The Lord Lau——'

Chairman (loudly). '*Scandalum magnatum!*'
First Voice. 'The Lord Chancel——'
Second Voice. 'The Lord Lauder——'
Chairman (louder yet). 'Breach of privilege!'
First Voice. 'The Lord Chancellor——'
Second Voice. 'My Lord Lauderdale——'
Chairman (at the highest pitch of his voice). 'Called before the House!'
Both Voices together. 'Will never consent to such a bill.'

A general assent seemed to follow this last proposition, which was propounded with as much emphasis as could be contributed by the united clappers of the whole meeting, joined to those of the voices already mentioned.

Several persons present seemed to consider the business of the meeting as ended, and were beginning to handle their hats and canes, with a view to departure, when the Chairman, who had thrown himself back in his chair with an air of manifest mortification and displeasure, again drew himself up, and commanded attention. All stopped, though some shrugged their shoulders, as if under the predominating influence of what is called a 'bore.' But the tenor of his discourse soon excited anxious attention.

'I perceive, gentlemen,' he said, 'that you are like the young birds, who are impatient to leave their mother's nest; take care your own pen-feathers are strong enough to support you, since, as for my part, I am tired of supporting on my wing such a set of ungrateful gulls. But it signifies nothing speaking — I will no longer avail myself of such weak ministers as you: I will discard you — I will unbeget you, as Sir Anthony Absolute says — I will leave you and your whole hacked stock in trade — your caverns and your castles — your modern antiques and your antiquated moderns — your confusion of times, manners and circumstances — your properties, as player-folk say of scenery and dresses — the whole of your exhausted expedients, to the fools who choose to deal with them. I will vindicate my own fame with my own right hand, without appealing to such halting assistants,

> Whom I have used for sport, rather than need.

I will lay my foundations better than on quicksands. I will rear my structure of better materials than painted cards; in a word, I will write HISTORY!'

There was a tumult of surprise, amid which our reporter

detected the following expressions — 'The devil you will!' — 'You, my dear sir — *you?*' — 'The old gentleman forgets that he is the greatest liar since Sir John Mandeville.'

'Not the worse historian for that,' said Oldbuck, 'since history, you know, is half fiction.'

'I 'll answer for that half being forthcoming,' said the former speaker; 'but for the scantling of truth which is necessary after all, Lord help us! Geoffrey of Monmouth will be Lord Clarendon to him.'

As the confusion began to abate, more than one member of the meeting was seen to touch his forehead significantly, while Captain Clutterbuck hummed,

'Be by your friends advised,
Too rash, too hasty, dad,
Maugre your bolts and wise head,
The world will think you mad.'

'The world, and you, gentlemen, may think what you please,' said the Chairman, elevating his voice; 'but I intend to write the most wonderful book which the world ever read — a book in which every incident shall be incredible, yet strictly true — a work recalling recollections with which the ears of this generation once tingled, and which shall be read by our children with an admiration approaching to incredulity. Such shall be the LIFE OF NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE, by the AUTHOR OF WAVERLEY!'

In the general start and exclamation which followed this annunciation, Mr. Oldbuck dropped his snuff-box; and the Scottish rappee, which dispersed itself in consequence, had effects upon the nasal organs of our reporter, ensconced as he was under the secretary's table, which occasioned his being discovered and extruded in the illiberal and unhandsome manner we have mentioned, with threats of farther damage to his nose, ears, and other portions of his body, on the part especially of Captain Clutterbuck. Undismayed by these threats, which indeed those of his profession are accustomed to hold at defiance, our young man hovered about the door of the tavern, but could only bring us the further intelligence, that the meeting had broken up in about a quarter of an hour after his expulsion, in much-admired disorder.

THE BETROTHED

CHAPTER I

Now in these dayes were hotte wars upon the marches of Wales.

LEWIS'S *History*.

THE chronicles from which this narrative is extracted assure us that, during the long period when the Welsh princes maintained their independence, the year 1187 was peculiarly marked as favourable to peace betwixt them and their warlike neighbours, the Lords Marchers, who inhabited those formidable castles on the frontiers of the ancient British on the ruins of which the traveller gazes with wonder. This was the time when Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury, accompanied by the learned Giraldus de Barri, afterwards Bishop of St. David's, preached the Crusade from castle to castle, from town to town; awakened the inmost valleys of his native Cambria with the call to arms for recovery of the Holy Sepulchre; and, while he deprecated the feuds and wars of Christian men against each other, held out to the martial spirit of the age a general object of ambition, and a scene of adventure where the favour of Heaven, as well as of earthly renown, was to reward the successful champions.

Yet the British chieftains, among the thousands whom this spirit-stirring summons called from their native land to a distant and perilous expedition, had perhaps the best excuse for declining the summons. The superior skill of the Anglo-Norman knights, who were engaged in constant inroads on the Welsh frontier, and who were frequently detaching from it large portions, which they fortified with castles, thus making good what they had won, was avenged; indeed, but not compensated, by the furious inroads of the British, who, like the

billows of a retiring tide, rolled on successively with noise, fury, and devastation; but, on each retreat, yielded ground insensibly to their invaders.

A union among the native princes might have opposed a strong and permanent barrier to the encroachments of the strangers; but they were, unhappily, as much at discord among themselves as they were with the Normans, and were constantly engaged in private war with each other, of which the common enemy had the sole advantage.

The invitation to the Crusade promised something at least of novelty to a nation peculiarly ardent in their temper; and it was accepted by many, regardless of the consequences which must ensue to the country which they left defenceless. Even the most celebrated enemies of the Saxon and Norman race laid aside their enmity against the invaders of their country, to enrol themselves under the banners of the Crusade.

Amongst these was reckoned Gwenwyn (or more properly Gwenwynwen, though we retain the briefer appellative), a British prince exercising a precarious sovereignty over such parts of Powys Land as had not been subjugated by the Mortimers, Guarines, Latimers, FitzAlans, and other Norman nobles, who, under various pretexts, and sometimes contemning all other save the open avowal of superior force, had severed and appropriated large portions of that once extensive and independent principality, which, when Wales was unhappily divided into three parts on the death of Roderick Mawr, fell to the lot of his youngest son, Mervyn. The undaunted resolution and stubborn ferocity of Gwenwyn, descendant of that prince, had long made him beloved among the 'tall men,' or champions, of Wales; and he was enabled, more by the number of those who served under him, attracted by his reputation, than by the natural strength of his dilapidated principality, to retaliate the encroachments of the English by the most wasteful inroads.

Yet even Gwenwyn on the present occasion seemed to forget his deeply-sworn hatred against his dangerous neighbours. The Torch of Pengwern, for so Gwenwyn was called, from his frequently laying the province of Shrewsbury in conflagration, seemed at present to burn as calmly as a taper in the bower of a lady; and the Wolf of Plinlimmon, another name with which the bards had graced Gwenwyn, now slumbered as peacefully as the shepherd's dog on the domestic hearth.

But it was not alone the eloquence of Baldwin or of Girald

which had lulled into peace a spirit so restless and fierce. It is true, their exhortations had done more towards it than Gwenwyn's followers had thought possible. The archbishop had induced the British chief to break bread, and to mingle in silvan sports, with his nearest, and hitherto one of his most determined, enemies, the old Norman warrior Sir Raymond Berenger, who, sometimes beaten, sometimes victorious, but never subdued, had, in spite of Gwenwyn's hottest incursions, maintained his Castle of Garde Doloureuse, upon the marches of Wales — a place, strong by nature and well fortified by art, which the Welsh prince had found it impossible to conquer, either by open force or by stratagem, and which, remaining with a strong garrison in his rear, often checked his incursions, by rendering his retreat precarious.

On this account, Gwenwyn of Powys Land had an hundred times vowed the death of Raymond Berenger and the demolition of his castle; but the policy of the sagacious old warrior, and his long experience in all warlike practice, were such as, with the aid of his more powerful countrymen, enabled him to defy the attempts of his fiery neighbour. If there was a man, therefore, throughout England whom Gwenwyn hated more than another, it was Raymond Berenger; and yet the good Archbishop Baldwin could prevail on the Welsh prince to meet him as a friend and ally in the cause of the Cross. He even invited Raymond to the autumn festivities of his Welsh palace, where the old knight, in all honourable courtesy, feasted and hunted for more than a week in the dominions of his hereditary foe

To requite this hospitality, Raymond invited the Prince of Powys, with a chosen but limited train, during the ensuing Christmas, to the Garde Doloureuse, which some antiquaries have endeavoured to identify with the Castle of Colune, on the river of the same name. But the length of time, and some geographical difficulties, throw doubts upon this ingenious conjecture.

As the Welshman crossed the drawbridge, he was observed by his faithful bard to shudder with involuntary emotion; nor did Cadwallon, experienced as he was in life, and well acquainted with the character of his master, make any doubt that he was at that moment strongly urged by the apparent opportunity to seize upon the strong fortress which had been so long the object of his cupidity, even at the expense of violating his good faith.

Dreading lest the struggle of his master's conscience and his ambition should terminate unfavourably for his fame, the bard arrested his attention by whispering in their native language that 'the teeth which bite hardest are those which are out of sight'; and Gwenwyn, looking around him, became aware that, though only unarmed squires and pages appeared in the court-yard, yet the towers and battlements connecting them were garnished with archers and men-at-arms.

They proceeded to the banquet, at which Gwenwyn, for the first time, beheld Eveline Berenger, the sole child of the Norman castellane, the inheritor of his domains and of his supposed wealth, aged only sixteen, and the most beautiful damsel upon the Welsh marches. Many a spear had already been sh[illegible]ed in maintenance of her charms; and the gallant Hugo de Lacy, Constable of Chester, one of the most redoubted warriors of the time, had laid at Eveline's feet the prize which his chivalry had gained in a great tournament held near that ancient town. Gwenwyn considered these triumphs as so many additional recommendations to Eveline; her beauty was incontestable, and she was heiress of the fortress which he so much longed to possess, and which he began now to think might be acquired by means more smooth than those with which he was in the use of working out his will.

Again, the hatred which subsisted between the British and their Saxon and Norman invaders, his long and ill-extinguished feud with this very Raymond Berenger, a general recollection that alliances between the Welsh and English had rarely been happy, and a consciousness that the measure which he meditated would be unpopular among his followers, and appear a dereliction of the systematic principles on which he had hitherto acted, restrained him from speaking his wishes to Raymond or his daughter. The idea of the rejection of his suit did not for a moment occur to him: he was convinced he had but to speak his wishes, and that the daughter of a Norman castellane, whose rank or power were not of the highest order among the nobles of the frontiers, must be delighted and honoured by a proposal for allying his family with that of the sovereign of a hundred mountains.

There was indeed another objection, which in later times would have been of considerable weight — Gwenwyn was already married. But Brengwain was a childless bride; sovereigns, and among sovereigns the Welsh prince ranked himself, marry for lineage, and the Pope was not likely to be scrupulous

where the question was to oblige a prince who had assumed the cross with such ready zeal, even although, in fact, his thoughts had been much more on the Garde Dolorense than on Jerusalem. In the meanwhile, if Raymond Berenger, as was suspected, was not liberal enough in his opinions to permit Eveline to hold the temporary rank of concubine, which the manners of Wales warranted Gwenwyn to offer as an interim arrangement, he had only to wait for a few months, and sue for a divorce through the Bishop of St. David's or some other intercessor at the court of Rome.

Agitating these thoughts in his mind, Gwenwyn prolonged his residence at the castle of Berenger from Christmas till Twelfth Day; and endured the presence of the Norman cavaliers who resorted to Raymond's festal halls, although, regarding themselves, in virtue of their rank of knighthood, equal to the most potent sovereigns, they made small account of the long descent of the Welsh prince, who, in their eyes, was but the chief of a semi-barbarous province; while he, on his part, considered them little better than a sort of privileged robbers, and with the utmost difficulty restrained himself from manifesting his open hatred, when he beheld them careering in the exercises of chivalry, the habitual use of which rendered them such formidable enemies to his country. At length the term of feasting was ended, and knight and squire departed from the castle, which once more assumed the aspect of a solitary and guarded frontier fort.

But the Prince of Powys Land, while pursuing his sports on his own mountains and valleys, found that even the abundance of the game, as well as his release from the society of the Norman chivalry, who affected to treat him as an equal, profited him nothing, so long as the light and beautiful form of Eveline, on her white palfrey, was banished from the train of sportsmen. In short, he hesitated no longer, but took into his confidence his chaplain, an able and sagacious man, whose pride was flattered by his patron's communication, and who, besides, saw in the proposed scheme some contingent advantages for himself and his order. By his counsel the proceedings for Gwenwyn's divorce were prosecuted under favourable auspices, and the unfortunate Brengwain was removed to a nunnery, which, perhaps, she found a more cheerful habitation than the lonely retreat in which she had led a neglected life ever since Gwenwyn had despaired of her bed being blessed with issue. Father Einion also dealt with the chiefs and elders of the land, and

represented to them the advantage which in future wars they were certain to obtain by the possession of the Garde Doloureuse, which had for more than a century covered and protected a considerable tract of country, rendered their advance difficult, and their retreat perilous, and, in a word, prevented their carrying their incursions as far as the gates of Shrewsbury. As for the union with the Saxon damsel, the fetters which it was to form might not, the good father hinted, be found more permanent than those which had bound Gwenwyn to her predecessor, Brengwain.

These arguments, mingled with others adapted to the views and wishes of different individuals, were so prevailing, that the chaplain in the course of a few weeks was able to report to his princely patron that his proposed match would meet with no opposition from the elders and nobles of his dominions. A golden bracelet, six ounces in weight, was the instant reward of the priest's dexterity in negotiation, and he was appointed by Gwenwyn to commit to paper those proposals which he doubted not were to throw the Castle of Garde Doloureuse, notwithstanding its melancholy name, into an ecstasy of joy. With some difficulty the chaplain prevailed on his patron to say nothing in this letter upon his temporary plan of concubinage, which he wisely judged might be considered as an affront both by Eveline and her father. The matter of the divorce he represented as almost entirely settled, and wound up his letter with a moral application, in which were many allusions to Vashti, Esther, and Ahasuerus.

Having despatched this letter by a swift and trusty messenger, the British prince opened in all solemnity the feast of Easter, which had come round during the course of these *external* and *internal* negotiations.

Upon the approaching holy-tide, to propitiate the minds of his subjects and vassals, they were invited in large numbers to partake a princely festivity at Castell Coch, or the Red Castle, as it was then called, since better known by the name of Powys Castle, and in latter times the princely seat of the Duke of Beaufort. The architectural magnificence of this noble residence is of a much later period than that of Gwenwyn, whose palace, at the time we speak of, was a long, low-roofed edifice of red stone, whence the castle derived its name; while a ditch and palisade were, in addition to the commanding situation, its most important defences.

CHAPTER II

In Madoc's tent the clarion sounds,
With rapid clangor hurried far;
Each hill and dale the note rebounds,
But when return the sons of war?
Thou, born of stern necessity,
Dull peace! the valley yields to thee,
And owns thy melancholy sway.

Welsh Poem.

THE feasts of the ancient British princes usually exhibited all the rude splendour and liberal indulgence of mountain hospitality, and Gwenwyn was, on the present occasion, anxious to purchase popularity by even an unusual display of profusion; for he was sensible that the alliance which he meditated might indeed be tolerated, but could not be approved, by his subjects and followers.

The following incident, trifling in itself, confirmed his apprehensions. Passing one evening, when it was become nearly dark, by the open window of a guard-room, usually occupied by some few of his most celebrated soldiers, who relieved each other in watching his palace, he heard Morgan, a man distinguished for strength, courage, and ferocity, say to the companion with whom he was sitting by the watch-fire, 'Gwenwyn is turned to a priest or a woman! When was it before these last months that a follower of his was obliged to gnaw the meat from the bone so closely as I am now peeling the morsel which I hold in my hand?'[1]

'Wait but a while,' replied his comrade, 'till the Norman match be accomplished; and so small will be the prey we shall then drive from the Saxon churls, that we may be glad to swallow, like hungry dogs, the very bones themselves.'

Gwenwyn heard no more of their conversation; but this was enough to alarm his pride as a soldier and his jealousy as a prince. He was sensible that the people over whom he ruled

[1] See Taunt of Effeminacy. Note 1.

were at once fickle in their disposition, impatient of long repose, and full of hatred against their neighbours; and he almost dreaded the consequences of the inactivity to which a long truce might reduce them. The risk was now incurred, however; and to display even more than his wonted splendour and liberality seemed the best way of reconciling the wavering affections of his subjects.

A Norman would have despised the barbarous magnificence of an entertainment consisting of kine and sheep roasted whole, of goats' flesh and deer's flesh seethed in the skins of the animals themselves; for the Normans piqued themselves on the quality rather than the quantity of their food, and, eating rather delicately than largely, ridiculed the coarser taste of the Britons, although the last were in their banquets much more moderate than were the Saxons; nor would the oceans of 'crw' and hydromel, which overwhelmed the guests like a deluge, have made up, in their opinion, for the absence of the more elegant and costly beverage which they had learned to love in the south of Europe. Milk prepared in various ways was another material of the British entertainment which would not have received their approbation, although a nutriment which, on ordinary occasions, often supplied the want of all others among the ancient inhabitants, whose country was rich in flocks and herds, but poor in agricultural produce.

The banquet was spread in a long low hall, built of rough wood lined with shingles, having a fire at each end, the smoke of which, unable to find its way through the imperfect chimneys in the roof, rolled in cloudy billows above the heads of the revellers, who sat on low seats purposely to avoid its stifling fumes.[1] The mien and appearance of the company assembled was wild, and, even in their social hours, almost terrific. Their prince himself had the gigantic port and fiery eye fitted to sway an unruly people whose delight was in the field of battle; and the long mustachios which he and most of his champions wore added to the formidable dignity of his presence. Like most of those present, Gwenwyn was clad in a simple tunic of white linen cloth, a remnant of the dress which the Romans had introduced into provincial Britain; and he was distinguished by the *eudorchawg*,[2] or chain of twisted gold links, with which the Celtic tribes always decorated their chiefs. The collar, indeed, representing in form the species of links made by children out of rushes, was common to chieftains of inferior

[1] See Welsh Houses. Note 2.

[2] See Note 3.

rank, many of whom bore it in virtue of their birth, or had won it by military exploits; but a ring of gold, bent around the head, intermingled with Gwenwyn's hair; for he claimed the rank of one of three diademed princes of Wales, and his armlets and anklets of the same metal were peculiar to the Prince of Powys, as an independent sovereign. Two squires of his body, who dedicated their whole attention to his service, stood at the Prince's back; and at his feet sat a page, whose duty it was to keep them warm by chafing and by wrapping them in his mantle. The same right of sovereignty which assigned to Gwenwyn his golden crownlet gave him a title to the attendance of the foot-bearer, or youth, who lay on the rushes, and whose duty it was to cherish the Prince's feet in his lap or bosom.[1]

Notwithstanding the military disposition of the guests, and the danger arising from the feuds into which they were divided, few of the feasters wore any defensive armour except the light goat-skin buckler, which hung behind each man's seat. On the other hand, they were well provided with offensive weapons; for the broad, sharp, short, two-edged sword was another legacy of the Romans. Most added a wood-knife or poniard; and there were store of javelins, darts, bows and arrows, pikes, halberds, Danish axes, and Welsh hooks and bills; so, in case of ill-blood arising during the banquet, there was no lack of weapons to work mischief.

But although the form of the feast was somewhat disorderly, and that the revellers were unrestrained by the stricter rules of good-breeding which the laws of chivalry imposed, the Easter banquet of Gwenwyn possessed, in the attendance of twelve eminent bards, one source of the most exalted pleasure in a much higher degree than the proud Normans could themselves boast. The latter, it is true, had their minstrels, a race of men trained to the profession of poetry, song, and music; but although those arts were highly honoured, and the individual professors, when they attained to eminence, were often richly rewarded and treated with distinction, the order of minstrels, as such, was held in low esteem, being composed chiefly of worthless and dissolute strollers, by whom the art was assumed in order to escape from the necessity of labour, and to have the means of pursuing a wandering and dissipated course of life. Such, in all times, has been the censure upon the calling of those who dedicate themselves to the public

[1] See Foot-pages. Note 4.

amusement; among whom those distinguished by individual excellence are sometimes raised high in the social circle, while far the more numerous professors, who only reach mediocrity, are sunk into the lower scale. But such was not the case with the order of bards in Wales, who, succeeding to the dignity of the Druids, under whom they had originally formed a subordinate fraternity, had many immunities, were held in the highest reverence and esteem, and exercised much influence with their countrymen. Their power over the public mind even rivalled that of the priests themselves, to whom indeed they bore some resemblance; for they never wore arms, were initiated into their order by secret and mystic solemnities, and homage was rendered to their *awen*, or flow of poetic inspiration, as if it had been indeed marked with a divine character. Thus possessed of power and consequence, the bards were not unwilling to exercise their privileges, and sometimes, in doing so, their manners frequently savoured of caprice.

This was perhaps the case with Cadwallon, the chief bard of Gwenwyn, and who, as such, was expected to have poured forth the tide of song in the banqueting hall of his prince. But neither the anxious and breathless expectation of the assembled chiefs and champions, neither the dead silence which stilled the roaring hall when his harp was reverently placed before him by his attendant, nor even the commands or entreaties of the Prince himself, could extract from Cadwallon more than a short and interrupted prelude upon the instrument, the notes of which arranged themselves into an air inexpressibly mournful, and died away in silence. The Prince frowned darkly on the bard, who was himself far too deeply lost in gloomy thought to offer any apology, or even to observe his displeasure. Again he touched a few wild notes, and, raising his looks upward, seemed to be on the very point of bursting forth into a tide of song similar to those with which this master of his art was wont to enchant his hearers. But the effort was in vain; he declared that his right hand was withered, and pushed the instrument from him.

A murmur went round the company, and Gwenwyn read in their aspects that they received the unusual silence of Cadwallon on this high occasion as a bad omen. He called hastily on a young and ambitious bard named Caradoc of Menwygent, whose rising fame was likely soon to vie with the established reputation of Cadwallon, and summoned him to sing something which might command the applause of his sovereign and the

gratitude of the company. The young man was ambitious, and understood the arts of a courtier. He commenced a poem, in which, although under a feigned name, he drew such a poetic picture of Eveline Berenger that Gwenwyn was enraptured; and while all who had seen the beautiful original at once recognised the resemblance, the eyes of the Prince confessed at once his passion for the subject and his admiration of the poet. The figures of Celtic poetry, in themselves highly imaginative, were scarce sufficient for the enthusiasm of the ambitious bard, rising in his tone as he perceived the feelings which he was exciting. The praises of the Prince mingled with those of the Norman beauty; and 'as a lion,' said the poet, 'can only be led by the hand of a chaste and beautiful maiden, so a chief can only acknowledge the empire of the most virtuous, the most lovely of her sex. Who asks of the noonday sun in what quarter of the world he was born? and who shall ask of such charms as hers to what country they owe their birth?'

Enthusiasts in pleasure as in war, and possessed of imaginations which answered readily to the summons of their poets, the Welsh chiefs and leaders united in acclamations of applause; and the song of the bard went farther to render popular the intended alliance of the Prince than had all the graver arguments of his priestly precursor in the same topic.

Gwenwyn himself, in a transport of delight, tore off the golden bracelets which he wore, to bestow them upon a bard whose song had produced an effect so desirable; and said, as he looked at the silent and sullen Cadwallon, 'The silent harp was never strung with golden wires.'

'Prince,' answered the bard, whose pride was at least equal to that of Gwenwyn himself, 'you pervert the proverb of Taliessin: it is the flattering harp which never lacked golden strings.'

Gwenwyn, turning sternly towards him, was about to make an angry answer, when the sudden appearance of Jorworth, the messenger whom he had despatched to Raymond Berenger, arrested his purpose. This rude envoy entered the hall barelegged, excepting the sandals of goat-skin which he wore, and having on his shoulder a cloak of the same, and a short javelin in his hand. The dust on his garments and the flush on his brow showed with what hasty zeal his errand had been executed. Gwenwyn demanded of him eagerly, 'What news from Garde Doloureuse, Jorworth ap Jevan?'

'I bear them in my bosom,' said the son of Jevan; and, with much reverence, he delivered to the Prince a packet, bound with silk, and sealed with the impression of a swan, the ancient cognizance of the house of Berenger. Himself ignorant of writing or reading, Gwenwyn, in anxious haste, delivered the letter to Cadwallon, who usually acted as secretary when the chaplain was not in presence, as chanced then to be the case. Cadwallon, looking at the letter, said briefly, 'I read no Latin. Ill betide the Norman who writes to a Prince of Powys in other language than that of Britain! and well was the hour when that noble tongue alone was spoken from Tintadgel to Cairleon!'

Gwenwyn only replied to him with an angry glance.

'Where is Father Einion?' said the impatient prince.

'He assists in the church,' replied one of his attendants, 'for it is the feast of St. ——'

'Were it the feast of St. David,' said Gwenwyn, 'and were the pyx between his hands, he must come hither to me instantly!'

One of the chief henchmen sprung off to command his attendance, and, in the meantime, Gwenwyn eyed the letter containing the secret of his fate, but which it required an interpreter to read, with such eagerness and anxiety, that Caradoc, elated by his former success, threw in a few notes to divert, if possible, the tenor of his patron's thoughts during the interval. A light and lively air, touched by a hand which seemed to hesitate, like the submissive voice of an inferior fearing to interrupt his master's meditations, introduced a stanza or two applicable to the subject.

'And what though thou, O scroll,' he said, apostrophising the letter, which lay on the table before his master, 'dost speak with the tongue of the stranger? Hath not the cuckoo a harsh note, and yet she tells us of green buds and springing flowers? What if thy language be that of the stoled priest, is it not the same which binds hearts and hands together at the altar? And what though thou delayest to render up thy treasures, are not all pleasures most sweet when enhanced by expectation? What were the chase, if the deer dropped at our feet the instant he started from the cover; or what value were there in the love of the maiden, were it yielded without coy delay?'

The song of the bard was here broken short by the entrance of the priest, who, hasty in obeying the summons of his im-

patient master, had not tarried to lay aside even the stole which he had worn in the holy service; and many of the elders thought it no good omen that, so habited, a priest should appear in a festive assembly, and amid profane minstrelsy.

The priest opened the letter of the Norman baron, and, struck with surprise at the contents, lifted his eyes in silence.

'Read it!' exclaimed the fierce Gwenwyn.

'So please you,' replied the more prudent chaplain, 'a smaller company were a fitter audience.'

'Read it aloud!' repeated the Prince, in a still higher tone: there sit none here who respect not the honour of their prince, or who deserve not his confidence. Read it, I say, aloud, and by St. David, if Raymond the Norman hath dared ——'

He stopped short, and, reclining on his seat, composed himself to an attitude of attention; but it was easy for his followers to fill up the breach in his exclamation which prudence had recommended.

The voice of the chaplain was low and ill-assured as he read the following epistle: —

'Raymond Berenger, the noble Norman Knight, Seneschal of the Garde Doloureuse, to Gwenwyn, Prince of Powys — May peace be between them! — sendeth health.

'Your letter, craving the hand of our daughter Eveline Berenger, was safely delivered to us by your servant, Jorworth ap Jevan, and we thank you heartily for the good meaning therein expressed to us and to ours. But, considering within ourselves the difference of blood and lineage, with the impediments and causes of offence which have often arisen in the like cases, we hold it fitter to match our daughter among our own people; and this by no case in disparagement of you, but solely for the weal of you, of ourselves, and of our mutual dependants, who will be the more safe from the risk of quarrel betwixt us, that we essay not to draw the bonds of our intimacy more close than beseemeth. The sheep and the goats feed together in peace on the same pastures, but they mingle not in blood or race the one with the other. Moreover, our daughter Eveline hath been sought in marriage by a noble and potent Lord of the Marches, Hugo de Lacy, the Constable of Chester, to which most honourable suit we have returned a favourable answer. It is therefore impossible that we should

in this matter grant to you the boon you seek; nevertheless, you shall at all times find us, in other matters, willing to pleasure you; and hereunto we call God, and Our Lady, and St. Mary Magdalene of Quatford to witness, to whose keeping we heartily recommend you.

'Written by our command, at our Castle of Garde Doloureuse, within the Marches of Wales, by a reverend priest, Father Aldrovand, a black monk of the house of Wenlock; and to which we have appended our seal, upon the eve of the blessed martyr St. Alphegius, to whom be honour and glory!'

The voice of Father Einion faltered, and the scroll which he held in his hand trembled in his grasp, as he arrived at the conclusion of this epistle; for well he knew that insults more slight than Gwenwyn would hold the least word it contained were sure to put every drop of his British blood into the most vehement commotion. Nor did it fail to do so. The Prince had gradually drawn himself up from the posture of repose in which he had prepared to listen to the epistle; and when it concluded, he sprung on his feet like a startled lion, spurning from him as he rose the foot-bearer, who rolled at some distance on the floor. 'Priest,' he said, 'hast thou read that accursed scroll fairly? for if thou hast added or diminished one word or one letter I will have thine eyes so handled that thou shalt never read letter more.'

The monk replied, trembling, for he was well aware that the sacerdotal character was not uniformly respected among the irascible Welshmen, 'By the oath of my order, mighty prince, I have read word for word and letter for letter.'

There was a momentary pause, while the fury of Gwe. at this unexpected affront, offered to him in the presence o his *uckelwyr* (*i. e.* noble chiefs, literally men of high statu. seemed too big for utterance, when the silence was broken by a few notes from the hitherto mute harp of Cadwallon. The Prince looked round at first with displeasure at the interruption, for he was himself about to speak; but when he beheld the bard bending over his harp with an air of inspiration, and blending together, with unexampled skill, the wildest and most exalted tones of his art, he himself became an auditor instead of a speaker, and Cadwallon, not the Prince, seemed to become the central point of the assembly, on wh all eyes were bent, and to whom each ear was turned with

breathless eagerness, as if his strains were the responses of an oracle.

'We wed not with the stranger,' thus burst the song from the lips of the poet. 'Vortigern wedded with the stranger; thence came the first woe upon Britain, and a sword upon her nobles, and a thunderbolt upon her palace. We wed not with the enslaved Saxon: the free and princely stag seeks not for his bride the heifer whose neck the yoke hath worn. We wed not with the rapacious Norman: the noble hound scorns to seek a mate from the herd of ravening wolves. When was it heard that the Cymry, the descendants of Brute, the true children of the soil of fair Britain, were plundered, oppressed, bereft of their birthright, and insulted even in their last retreats — when, but since they stretched their hand in friendship to the stranger, and clasped to their bosoms the daughter of the Saxon? Which of the two is feared — the empty watercourse of summer or the channel of the headlong winter torrent? A maiden smiles at the summer-shrunk brook while she crosses it, but a barbed horse and his rider will fear to stem the wintry flood. Men of Mathravel and Powys, be the dreaded flood of winter! Gwenwyn, son of Cyveiliock, may thy plume be the topmost of its waves!'

All thoughts of peace — thoughts which in themselves were foreign to the hearts of the warlike British — passed before the song of Cadwallon like dust before the whirlwind, and the unanimous shout of the assembly declared for instant war. The Prince himself spoke not, but, looking proudly around him, flung abroad his arm, as one who cheers his followers to the attack.

The priest, had he dared, might have reminded Gwenwyn that the cross which he had assumed on his shoulder had consecrated his arm to the Holy War, and precluded his engaging in any civil strife. But the task was too dangerous for Father Einion's courage, and he shrunk from the hall to the seclusion of his own convent. Caradoc, whose brief hour of popularity was past, also retired, with humbled and dejected looks, and not without a glance of indignation at his triumphant rival, who had so judiciously reserved his display of art for the theme of war, that was ever most popular with the audience.

The chiefs resumed their seats no longer for the purpose of festivity, but to fix, in the hasty manner customary among these prompt warriors, where they were to assemble their

forces, which, upon such occasions, comprehended almost all the able-bodied males of the country — for all, excepting the priests and the bards, were soldiers — and to settle the order of their descent upon the devoted marches, where they proposed to signalise, by general ravage, their sense of the insult which their prince had received, by the rejection of his suit.

CHAPTER III

The sands are number'd that make up my life;
Here must I stay, and here my life must end.

Henry VI. Act I. Scene IV.

WHEN Raymond Berenger had despatched his mission to the Prince of Powys, he was not unsuspicious, though altogether fearless, of the result. He sent messengers to the several dependants who held their fiefs by the tenure of 'cornage,' and warned them to be on the alert, that he might receive instant notice of the approach of the enemy. These vassals, as is well known, occupied the numerous towers which, like so many falcon-nests, had been built on the points most convenient to defend the frontiers, and were bound to give signal of any incursion of the Welsh, by blowing their horns; which sounds, answered from tower to tower and from station to station, gave the alarm for general defence. But although Raymond considered these precautions as necessary, from the fickle and precarious temper of his neighbours, and for maintaining his own credit as a soldier, he was far from believing the danger to be imminent; for the preparations of the Welsh, though on a much more extensive scale than had lately been usual, were as secret as their resolution of war had been suddenly adopted.

It was upon the second morning after the memorable festival of Castell Coch that the tempest broke on the Norman frontier. At first a single, long, and keen bugle-blast announced the approach of the enemy; presently the signals of alarm were echoed from every castle and tower on the borders of Shropshire, where every place of habitation was then a fortress. Beacons were lighted upon crags and eminences, the bells were rung backward in the churches and towns, while the general and earnest summons to arms announced an extremity of danger which even the inhabitants of that unsettled country had not hitherto experienced.

Amid this general alarm, Raymond Berenger having busied

himself in arranging his few but gallant followers and adherents, and taken such modes of procuring intelligence of the enemy's strength and motions as were in his power, at length ascended the watch-tower of the castle, to observe in person the country around, already obscured in several places by the clouds of smoke which announced the progress and the ravages of the invaders. He was speedily joined by his favourite squire, to whom the unusual heaviness of his master's looks was cause of much surprise, for till now they had ever been blythest at the hour of battle. The squire held in his hand his master's helmet, for Sir Raymond was all armed saving the head.

'Dennis Morolt,' said the veteran soldier, 'are our vassals and liegemen all mustered?'

'All, noble sir, but the Flemings, who are not yet come in.'

'The lazy hounds, why tarry they?' said Raymond. 'Ill policy it is to plant such sluggish natures in our borders. They are like their own steers, fitter to tug a plough than for aught that requires mettle.'

'With your favour,' said Dennis, 'the knaves can do good service notwithstanding. That Wilkin Flammock of the Green can strike like the hammers of his own fulling-mill.'

'He will fight, I believe, when he cannot help it,' said Raymond; 'but he has no stomach for such exercise, and is as slow and as stubborn as a mule.'

'And therefore are his countrymen rightly matched against the Welsh,' replied Dennis Morolt, 'that their solid and unyielding temper may be a fit foil to the fiery and headlong dispositions of our dangerous neighbours, just as restless waves are best opposed by steadfast rocks. Hark, sir, I hear Wilkin Flammock's step ascending the turret-stair as deliberately as ever monk mounted to matins.'

Step by step the heavy sound approached, until the form of the huge and substantial Fleming at length issued from the turret-door to the platform where they were conversing. Wilkin Flammock was cased in bright armour, of unusual weight and thickness, and cleaned with exceeding care, which marked the neatness of his nation; but, contrary to the custom of the Normans, entirely plain, and void of carving, gilding, or any sort of ornament. The basenet, or steel-cap, had no visor, and left exposed a broad countenance, with heavy and unpliable features, which announced the character of his temper and understanding. He carried in his hand a heavy mace.

'So, sir Fleming,' said the castellane, 'you are in no hurry, methinks, to repair to the rendezvous.'

'So please you,' answered the Fleming, 'we were compelled to tarry, that we might load our wains with our bales of cloth and other property.'

'Ha! wains! How many wains have you brought with you?'

'Six, noble sir,' replied Wilkin.

'And how many men?' demanded Raymond Berenger.

'Twelve, valiant sir,' answered Flammock.

'Only two men to each baggage-wain? I wonder you would thus encumber yourself,' said Berenger.

'Under your favour, sir, once more,' replied Wilkin, 'it is only the value which I and my comrades set upon our goods that inclines us to defend them with our bodies; and, had we been obliged to leave our cloth to the plundering clutches of yonder vagabonds, I should have seen small policy in stopping here to give them the opportunity of adding murder to robbery. Gloucester should have been my first halting-place.'

The Norman knight gazed on the Flemish artisan, for such was Wilkin Flammock, with such a mixture of surprise and contempt as excluded indignation. 'I have heard much,' he said, 'but this is the first time that I have heard one with a beard on his lip avouch himself a coward.'

'Nor do you hear it now,' answered Flammock, with the utmost composure. 'I am always ready to fight for life and property; and my coming to this country, where they are both in constant danger, shows that I care not much how often I do so. But a sound skin is better than a slashed one, for all that.'

'Well,' said Raymond Berenger, 'fight after thine own fashion, so thou wilt but fight stoutly with that long body of thine. We are like to have need for all that we can do. Saw you aught of these rascaille Welsh? Have they Gwenwyn's banner amongst them?'

'I saw it with the white dragon displayed,' replied Wilkin: 'I could not but know it, since it was broidered in my own loom.'

Raymond looked so grave upon this intelligence, that Dennis Morolt, unwilling the Fleming should mark it, thought it necessary to withdraw his attention. 'I can tell thee,' he said to Flammock, 'that, when the Constable of Chester joins us with his lances, you shall see your handiwork, the

dragon, fly faster homeward than ever flew the shuttle which wove it.'

'It must fly before the Constable comes up, Dennis Morolt,' said Berenger, 'else it will fly triumphant over all our bodies.'

'In the name of God and the Holy Virgin!' said Dennis, 'what may you mean, sir knight?—not that we should fight with the Welsh before the Constable joins us?' He paused, and then, well understanding the firm yet melancholy glance with which his master answered the question, he proceeded, with yet more vehement earnestness, 'You cannot mean it—you cannot intend that we shall quit this castle, which we have so often made good against them, and contend in the field with two hundred men against thousands? Think better of it, my beloved master, and let not the rashness of your old age blemish that character for wisdom and warlike skill which your former life has so nobly won.'

'I am not angry with you for blaming my purpose, Dennis,' answered the Norman, 'for I know you do it in love to me and mine. But, Dennis Morolt, this thing must be: we must fight the Welshmen within these three hours, or the name of Raymond Berenger must be blotted from the genealogy of this house.'

'And so we will—we will fight them, my noble master,' said the esquire; 'fear not cold counsel from Dennis Morolt, where battle is the theme. But we will fight them under the walls of the castle, with honest Wilkin Flammock and his cross-bows on the wall to protect our flanks, and afford us some balance against the numerous odds.'

'Not so, Dennis,' answered his master—'in the open field we must fight them, or thy master must rank but as a man-sworn knight. Know, that when I feasted yonder wily savage in my halls at Christmas, and when the wine was flowing fastest around, Gwenwyn threw out some praises of the fastness and strength of my castle, in a manner which intimated it was these advantages alone that had secured me in former wars from defeat and captivity. I spoke in answer, when I had far better been silent; for what availed my idle boast, but as a fetter to bind me to a deed next to madness? "If," I said, "a prince of the Cymry shall again come in hostile fashion before the Garde Doloureuse, let him pitch his standard down in yonder plain by the bridge, and, by the word of a good knight and the faith of a Christian man, Raymond Berenger will meet him as willingly, be he many or be he few, as ever Welshman was met withal."'

Dennis was struck speechless when he heard of a promise so

rash, so fatal; but his was not the casuistry which could release his master from the fetters with which his unwary confidence had bound him. It was otherwise with Wilkin Flammock. He stared, he almost laughed, notwithstanding the reverence due to the castellane, and his own insensibility to risible emotions. 'And is this all?' he said. 'If your honour had pledged yourself to pay one hundred florins to a Jew or to a Lombard, no doubt you must have kept the day, or forfeited your pledge; but surely one day is as good as another to keep a promise for fighting, and that day is best in which the promiser is strongest. But indeed, after all, what signifies any promise over a wine flagon?'

'It signifies as much as a promise can do that is given elsewhere. The promiser,' said Berenger, 'escapes not the sin of a word-breaker because he hath been a drunken braggart.'

'For the sin,' said Dennis, 'sure I am, that rather than you should do such deed of dole, the Abbot of Glastonbury would absolve you for a florin.'

'But what shall wipe out the shame?' demanded Berenger. 'How shall I dare to show myself again among press of knights, who have broken my word of battle pledged, for fear of a Welshman and his naked savages? No, Dennis Morolt, speak of it no more. Be it for weal or woe, we fight them today, and upon yonder fair field.'

'It may be,' said Flammock, 'that Gwenwyn may have forgotten the promise, and so fail to appear to claim it in the appointed space; for, as we heard, your wines of France flooded his Welsh brains deeply.'

'He again alluded to it on the morning after it was made,' said the castellane; 'trust me, he will not forget what will give him such a chance of removing me from his path for ever.'

As he spoke, they observed that large clouds of dust, which had been seen at different points of the landscape, were drawing down towards the opposite side of the river, over which an ancient bridge extended itself to the appointed place of combat. They were at no loss to conjecture the cause. It was evident that Gwenwyn, recalling the parties who had been engaged in partial devastation, was bending with his whole forces towards the bridge and the plain beyond it.

'Let us rush down and secure the pass,' said Dennis Morolt; 'we may debate with them with some equality by the advantage of defending the bridge. Your word bound you to the plain as to a field of battle, but it did not oblige you to forego

such advantages as the passage of the bridge would afford. Our men, our horses, are ready; let our bowmen secure the banks, and my life on the issue.'

'When I promised to meet him in yonder field, I meant,' replied Raymond Berenger, 'to give the Welshman the full advantage of equality of ground. I so meant it, he so understood it; and what avails keeping my word in the letter, if I break it in the sense? We move not till the last Welshman has crossed the bridge; and then ——'

'And then,' said Dennis, 'we move to our death! May God forgive our sins! But ——'

'But what?' said Berenger; 'something sticks in thy mind that should have vent.'

'My young lady, your daughter the Lady Eveline ——'

'I have told her what is to be. She shall remain in the castle, where I will leave a few chosen veterans, with you, Dennis, to command them. In twenty-four hours the siege will be relieved, and we have defended it longer with a slighter garrison. Then to her aunt, the abbess of the Benedictine sisters; thou, Dennis, wilt see her placed there in honour and safety, and my sister will care for her future provision as her wisdom shall determine.'

'*I* leave you at this pinch!' said Dennis Morolt, bursting into tears. '*I* shut myself up within walls when my master rides to his last of battles! *I* become esquire to a lady, even though it be to the Lady Eveline, when he lies dead under his shield! Raymond Berenger, is it for this that I have buckled thy armour so often?'

The tears gushed from the old warrior's eyes as fast as from those of a girl who weeps for her lover; and Raymond, taking him kindly by the hand, said, in a soothing tone, 'Do not think, my good old servant, that, were honour to be won, I would drive thee from my side. But this is a wild and an inconsiderate deed, to which my fate or my folly has bound me. I die to save my name from dishonour; but, alas! I must leave on my memory the charge of imprudence.'

'Let me share your imprudence, my dearest master,' said Dennis Morolt, earnestly: 'the poor esquire has no business to be thought wiser than his master. In many a battle my valour derived some little fame from partaking in the deeds which won your renown; deny me not the right to share in that blame which your temerity may incur — let them not say that, so rash was his action, even his old esquire was not permitted

to partake in it! I am part of yourself: it is murder to every man whom you take with you, if you leave me behind.'

'Dennis,' said Berenger, 'you make me feel yet more bitterly the folly I have yielded to. I would grant you the boon you ask, sad as it is, but my daughter——'

'Sir knight,' said the Fleming, who had listened to this dialogue with somewhat less than his usual apathy, 'it is not my purpose this day to leave this castle; now, if you could trust my troth to do what a plain man may for the protection of my Lady Eveline——'

'How, sirrah!' said Raymond; 'you do not propose to leave the castle? Who gives you right to propose or dispose in the case, until my pleasure is known?'

'I shall be sorry to have words with you, sir castellane,' said the imperturbable Fleming; 'but I hold here, in this township, certain mills, tenements, cloth-yards, and so forth for which I am to pay man-service in defending this Castle of the Garde Doloureuse, and in this I am ready. But if you call on me to march from hence, leaving the same castle defenceless, and to offer up my life in a battle which you acknowledge to be desperate, I must needs say my tenure binds me not to obey thee.'

'Base mechanic!' said Morolt, laying his hand on his dagger and menacing the Fleming.

But Raymond Berenger interfered with voice and hand. 'Harm him not, Morolt, and blame him not. He hath a sense of duty, though not after our manner; and he and his knaves will fight best behind stone walls. They are taught also, these Flemings, by the practice of their own country, the attack and defence of walled cities and fortresses, and are especially skilful in working of mangonels and military engines. There are several of his countrymen in the castle, besides his own followers. These I propose to leave behind; and I think they will obey him more readily than any but myself—how think'st thou? Thou wouldst not, I know, from a misconstrued point of honour or a blind love to me, leave this important place, and the safety of Eveline, in doubtful hands?'

'Wilkin Flammock is but a Flemish clown, noble sir,' answered Dennis, as much overjoyed as if he had obtained some important advantage; 'but I must needs say he is as stout and true as any whom you might trust; and, besides, his own shrewdness will teach him there is more to be gained by defending such a castle as this than by yielding it to strangers,

who may not be likely to keep the terms of surrender, however fairly they may offer them.'

'It is fixed then,' said Raymond Berenger. 'Then, Dennis, thou shalt go with me, and he shall remain behind. Wilkin Flammock,' he said, addressing the Fleming solemnly, 'I speak not to thee the language of chivalry, of which thou knowest nothing; but, as thou art an honest man and a true Christian, I conjure thee to stand to the defence of this castle. Let no promise of the enemy draw thee to any base composition, no threat to any surrender. Relief must speedily arrive; if you fulfil your trust to me and to my daughter, Hugo de Lacy will reward you richly; if you fail, he will punish you severely.'

'Sir knight,' said Flammock, 'I am pleased you have put your trust so far in a plain handicraftsman. For the Welsh, I am come from a land for which we were compelled — yearly compelled — to struggle with the sea; and they who can deal with the waves in a tempest need not fear an undisciplined people in their fury. Your daughter shall be as dear to me as mine own; and in that faith you may prick forth — if, indeed, you will not still, like a wiser man, shut gate, down portcullis, up drawbridge, and let your archers and my cross-bows man the wall, and tell the knaves you are not the fool that they take you for.'

'Good fellow, that must not be,' said the knight. 'I hear my daughter's voice,' he added, hastily; 'I would not again meet her, again to part from her. To Heaven's keeping I commit thee, honest Fleming. Follow me, Dennis Morolt.'

The old castellane descended the stair of the southern tower hastily, just as his daughter Eveline ascended that of the eastern turret to throw herself at his feet once more. She was followed by the Father Aldrovand, chaplain of her father; by an old and almost invalided huntsman, whose more active services in the field and the chase had been for some time chiefly limited to the superintendence of the knight's kennels, and the charge especially of his more favourite hounds; and by Rose Flammock, the daughter of Wilkin, a blue-eyed Flemish maiden, round, plump, and shy as a partridge, who had been for some time permitted to keep company with the high-born Norman damsel, in a doubtful station, betwixt that of an humble friend and superior domestic.

Eveline rushed upon the battlements, her hair dishevelled and her eyes drowned in tears, and eagerly demanded of the Fleming where her father was.

Flammock made a clumsy reverence, and attempted some answer; but his voice seemed to fail him. He turned his back upon Eveline without ceremony, and, totally disregarding the anxious inquiries of the huntsman and the chaplain, he said hastily to his daughter, in his own language, 'Mad work!—mad work! look to the poor maiden, Rosehen. *Der alter Herr ist verrückt.*'

Without further speech, he descended the stairs, and never paused till he reached the buttery. Here he called like a lion for the controller of these regions, by the various names of kammerer, keller-master, and so forth, to which the old Reinold, an ancient Norman esquire, answered not until the Netherlander fortunately recollected his Anglo-Norman title of butler. This, his regular name of office, was the key to the buttery-hatch, and the old man instantly appeared, with his grey cassock and high rolled hose, a ponderous bunch of keys suspended by a silver chain to his broad leathern girdle, which, in consideration of the emergency of the time, he had thought it right to balance on the left side with a huge falchion, which seemed much too weighty for his old arm to wield.

'What is your will,' he said, 'Master Flammock? or what are your commands, since it is my lord's pleasure that they shall be laws to me for a time?'

'Only a cup of wine, good Meister Keller-master—butler, I mean.'

'I am glad you remember the name of mine office,' said Reinold, with some of the petty resentment of a spoiled domestic, who thinks that a stranger has been irregularly put in command over him.

'A flagon of Rhenish, if you love me,' answered the Fleming; 'for my heart is low and poor within me, and I must needs drink of the best.'

'And drink you shall,' said Reinold, 'if drink will give you the courage which perhaps you may want.' He descended to the secret crypts of which he was the guardian, and returned with a silver flagon which might contain about a quart. 'Here is such wine,' said Reinold, 'as thou hast seldom tasted,' and was about to pour it out into a cup.

'Nay, the flagon—the flagon, friend Reinold: I love a deep and solemn draught when the business is weighty,' said Wilkin. He seized on the flagon accordingly, and drinking a preparatory mouthful, paused as if to estimate the strength and flavour of the generous liquor. Apparently he was pleased with both, for

he nodded in approbation to the butler; and, raising the flagon to his mouth once more, he slowly and gradually brought the bottom of the vessel parallel with the roof of the apartment, without suffering one drop of the contents to escape him.

'That hath savour, Herr Keller-master,' said he, while he was recovering his breath by intervals, after so long a suspense of respiration; 'but, may Heaven forgive you for thinking it the best I have ever tasted! You little know the cellars of Ghent and of Ypres.'

'And I care not for them,' said Reinold: 'those of gentle Norman blood hold the wines of Gascony and France, generous, light, and cordial, worth all the acid potations of the Rhine and the Neckar.'

'All is matter of taste,' said the Fleming; 'but, harkye — is there much of this wine in the cellar?'

'Methought but now it pleased not your dainty palate?' said Reinold.

'Nay — nay, my friend,' said Wilkin, 'I said it had savour. I may have drunk better; but this is right good, where better may not be had. Again, how much of it hast thou?'

'The whole butt, man,' answered the butler; 'I have broached a fresh piece for you.'

'Good,' replied Flammock; 'get the quart-pot of Christian measure; heave the cask up into this same buttery, and let each soldier of this castle be served with such a cup as I have here swallowed. I feel it hath done me much good: my heart was sinking when I saw the black smoke arising from mine own fulling-mills yonder. Let each man, I say, have a full quart-pot: men defend not castles on thin liquors.'

'I must do as you will, good Wilkin Flammock,' said the butler; 'but I pray remember all men are not alike. That which will but warm your Flemish hearts will put wildfire into Norman brains; and what may only encourage your countrymen to man the walls will make ours fly over the battlements.'

'Well, you know the conditions of your own countrymen best: serve out to them what wines and measures you list — only let each Fleming have a solemn quart of Rhenish. But what will you do for the English churls, of whom there are a right many left with us?'

The old butler paused and rubbed his brow. 'There will be a strange waste of liquor,' he said; 'and yet I may not deny that the emergency may defend the expenditure. But for the English, they are, as you wot, a mixed breed, having much of

your German sullenness, together with a plentiful touch of the hot blood of yonder Welsh furies. Light wines stir them not; strong, heavy draughts would madden them. What think you of ale — an invigorating, strengthening liquor, that warms the heart without inflaming the brain?'

'Ale!' said the Fleming. 'Hum — ha — is your ale mighty, sir butler? — is it double ale?'

'Do you doubt my skill?' said the butler. 'March and October have witnessed me ever as they came round, for thirty years, deal with the best barley in Shropshire. You shall judge.'

He filled, from a large hogshead in the corner of the buttery, the flagon which the Fleming had just emptied, and which was no sooner replenished than Wilkin again drained it to the bottom.

'Good ware,' he said, 'Master Butler — strong, stinging ware. The English churls will fight like devils upon it; let them be furnished with mighty ale along with their beef and brown bread. And now, having given you your charge, Master Reinold, it is time I should look after mine own.'

Wilkin Flammock left the buttery, and with a mien and judgment alike undisturbed by the deep potations in which he had so recently indulged, undisturbed also by the various rumours concerning what was passing without doors, he made the round of the castle and its outworks, mustered the little garrison, and assigned to each their posts, reserving to his own countrymen the management of the arblasts, or cross-bows, and of the military engines which were contrived by the proud Normans, and were incomprehensible to the ignorant English, or, more properly, Anglo-Saxons, of the period, but which his more adroit countrymen managed with great address. The jealousies entertained by both the Normans and English, at being placed under the temporary command of a Fleming, gradually yielded to the military and mechanical skill which he displayed, as well as to a sense of the emergency, which became greater with every moment.

CHAPTER IV

Beside yon brigg out ower yon burn,
Where the water bickereth bright and sheen,
Shall many a falling courser spurn,
And knights shall die in battle keen.

Prophecy of Thomas the Rhymer.

THE daughter of Raymond Berenger, with the attendants whom we have mentioned, continued to remain upon the battlements of the Garde Doloureuse, in spite of the exhortations of the priest that she would rather await the issue of this terrible interval in the chapel, and amid the rites of religion. He perceived, at length, that she was incapable, from grief and fear, of attending to or understanding his advice; and, sitting down beside her, while the huntsman and Rose Flammock stood by, endeavoured to suggest such comfort as perhaps he scarcely felt himself.

'This is but a sally of your noble father's,' he said; 'and though it may seem it is made on great hazard, yet who ever questioned Sir Raymond Berenger's policy of wars? He is close and secret in his purposes. I guess right well he had not marched out as he proposes, unless he knew that the noble Earl of Arundel or the mighty Constable of Chester were close at hand.'

'Think you this assuredly, good father? Go, Raoul — go, my dearest Rose — look to the east — see if you cannot descry banners or clouds of dust. Listen — listen — hear you no trumpets from that quarter?'

'Alas! my lady,' said Raoul, 'the thunder of heaven could scarce be heard amid the howling of yonder Welsh wolves.' Eveline turned as he spoke, and, looking towards the bridge, she beheld an appalling spectacle.

The river, whose stream washes on three sides the base of the proud eminence on which the castle is situated, curves away from the fortress and its corresponding village on the west, and

HARLECH CASTLE.
From a painting by Penson.

the hill sinks downward to an extensive plain, so extremely level as to indicate its alluvial origin. Lower down, at the extremity of this plain, where the banks again close on the river, were situated the manufacturing houses of the stout Flemings, which were now burning in a bright flame. The bridge, a high, narrow combination of arches of unequal size, was about half a mile distant from the castle, in the very centre of the plain. The river itself ran in a deep rocky channel, was often unfordable, and at all times difficult of passage, giving considerable advantage to the defenders of the castle, who had spent on other occasions many a dear drop of blood to defend the pass, which Raymond Berenger's fantastic scruples now induced him to abandon. The Welshmen, seizing the opportunity with the avidity with which men grasp an unexpected benefit, were fast crowding over the high and steep arches, while new bands, collecting from different points upon the farther bank, increased the continued stream of warriors, who, passing leisurely and uninterrupted, formed their line of battle on the plain opposite to the castle.

At first Father Aldrovand viewed their motions without anxiety, nay, with the scornful smile of one who observes an enemy in the act of falling into the snare spread for them by superior skill. Raymond Berenger, with his little body of infantry and cavalry, were drawn up on the easy hill which is betwixt the castle and the plain, ascending from the former towards the fortress; and it seemed clear to the Dominican, who had not entirely forgotten in the cloister his ancient military experience, that it was the knight's purpose to attack the disordered enemy when a certain number had crossed the river, and the others were partly on the farther side and partly engaged in the slow and perilous manœuvre of effecting their passage. But when large bodies of the white-mantled Welshmen were permitted without interruption to take such order on the plain as their habits of fighting recommended, the monk's countenance, though he still endeavoured to speak encouragement to the terrified Eveline, assumed a different and an anxious expression; and his acquired habits of resignation contended strenuously with his ancient military ardour. 'Be patient,' he said, 'my daughter, and be of good comfort; thine eyes shall behold the dismay of yonder barbarous enemy. Let but a minute elapse, and thou shalt see them scattered like dust. St. George! they will surely cry thy name now, or never!'

The monk's beads passed meanwhile rapidly through his hands, but many an expression of military impatience mingled itself with his orisons. He could not conceive the cause why each successive throng of mountaineers, led under their different banners, and headed by their respective chieftains, was permitted, without interruption, to pass the difficult defile, and extend themselves in battle array on the near side of the bridge, while the English, or rather Anglo-Norman, cavalry remained stationary, without so much as laying their lances in rest. There remained, he thought, but one hope — one only rational explanation of this unaccountable inactivity — this voluntary surrender of every advantage of ground, when that of numbers was so tremendously on the side of the enemy. Father Aldrovand concluded that the succours of the Constable of Chester and other Lord Marchers must be in the immediate vicinity, and that the Welsh were only permitted to pass the river without opposition, that their retreat might be the more effectually cut off, and their defeat, with a deep river in their rear, rendered the more signally calamitous. But even while he clung to this hope, the monk's heart sunk within him, as, looking in every direction from which the expected succours might arrive, he could neither see nor hear the slightest token which announced their approach. In a frame of mind approaching more nearly to despair than to hope, the old man continued alternately to tell his beads, to gaze anxiously around, and to address some words of consolation in broken phrases to the young lady, until the general shout of the Welsh, ringing from the bank of the river to the battlements of the castle, warned him, in a note of exultation, that the very last of the British had defiled through the pass, and that their whole formidable array stood prompt for action upon the hither side of the river.

This thrilling and astounding clamour, to which each Welshman lent his voice with all the energy of defiance, thirst of battle, and hope of conquest, was at length answered by the blast of the Norman trumpets — the first sign of activity which had been exhibited on the part of Raymond Berenger. But cheerily as they rung, the trumpets, in comparison of the shout which they answered, sounded like the silver whistle of the stout boatswain amid the howling of the tempest.

At the same moment when the trumpets were blown, Berenger gave signal to the archers to discharge their arrows, and the men-at-arms to advance under a hail-storm of shafts, javelins,

and stones, shot, darted, and slung by the Welsh against their steel-clad assailants.

The veterans of Raymond, on the other hand, stimulated by many victorious recollections, confident in the talents of their accomplished leader, and undismayed even by the desperation of their circumstances, charged the mass of the Welshmen with their usual determined valour. It was a gallant sight to see this little body of cavalry advance to the onset, their plumes floating above their helmets, their lances in rest, and projecting six feet in length before the breasts of their coursers; their shields hanging from their necks, that their left hands might have freedom to guide their horses; and the whole body rushing on with an equal front, and a momentum of speed which increased with every second. Such an onset might have startled naked men (for such were the Welsh, in respect of the mail-sheathed Normans), but it brought no terrors to the ancient British, who had long made it their boast that they exposed their bare bosoms and white tunics to the lances and swords of the men-at-arms with as much confidence as if they had been born invulnerable. It was not indeed in their power to withstand the weight of the first shock, which, breaking their ranks, densely as they were arranged, carried the barbed horses into the very centre of their host, and wellnigh up to the fatal standard to which Raymond Berenger, bound by his fatal vow, had that day conceded so much vantage-ground. But they yielded like the billows, which give way, indeed, to the gallant ship, but only to assail her sides, and to unite in her wake. With wild and horrible clamours, they closed their tumultuous ranks around Berenger and his devoted followers, and a deadly scene of strife ensued.

The best warriors of Wales had on this occasion joined the standard of Gwenwyn; the arrows of the men of Gwentland, whose skill in archery almost equalled that of the Normans themselves, rattled on the helmets of the men-at-arms; and the spears of the people of Deheubarth, renowned for the sharpness and temper of their steel heads, were employed against the cuirasses, not without fatal effect, notwithstanding the protection which these afforded to the rider.

It was in vain that the archery belonging to Raymond's little band — stout yeomen who, for the most part, held possessions by military tenure — exhausted their quivers on the broad mark afforded them by the Welsh army. It is probable that every shaft carried a Welshman's life on its point; yet, to have

afforded important relief to the cavalry, now closely and inextricably engaged, the slaughter ought to have been twenty-fold at least. Meantime, the Welsh, galled by this incessant discharge, answered it by volleys from their own archers, whose numbers made some amends for their inferiority, and who were supported by numerous bodies of darters and slingers. So that the Norman archers, who had more than once attempted to descend from their position to operate a diversion in favour of Raymond and his devoted band, were now so closely engaged in front as obliged them to abandon all thoughts of such a movement.

Meanwhile, that chivalrous leader, who from the first had hoped for no more than an honourable death, laboured with all his power to render his fate signal by involving in it that of the Welsh prince, the author of the war. He cautiously avoided the expenditure of his strength by hewing among the British; but, with the shock of his managed horse, repelled the numbers who pressed on him, and leaving the plebeians to the swords of his companions, shouted his war-cry, and made his way towards the fatal standard of Gwenwyn, beside which, discharging at once the duties of a skilful leader and a brave soldier, the Prince had stationed himself. Raymond's experience of the Welsh disposition, subject equally to the highest flood and most sudden ebb of passion, gave him some hope that a successful attack upon this point, followed by the death or capture of the Prince and the downfall of his standard, might even yet strike such a panic as should change the fortunes of the day, otherwise so nearly desperate. The veteran, therefore, animated his comrades to the charge by voice and example; and, in spite of all opposition, forced his way gradually onward. But Gwenwyn in person, surrounded by his best and noblest champions, offered a defence as obstinate as the assault was intrepid. In vain they were borne to the earth by the barbed horses, or hewed down by the invulnerable riders. Wounded and overthrown, the Britons continued their resistance, clung round the legs of the Norman steeds and cumbered their advance; while their brethren, thrusting with pikes, proved every joint and crevice of the plate and mail, or, grappling with the men-at-arms, strove to pull them from their horses by main force, or beat them down with their bills and Welsh hooks. And woe betide those who were by these various means dismounted, for the long sharp knives worn by the Welsh soon pierced them with a hundred

wounds, and were then only merciful when the first inflicted was deadly.

The combat was at this point, and had raged for more than half an hour, when Berenger, having forced his horse within two spears' length of the British standard, he and Gwenwyn were so near to each other as to exchange tokens of mutual defiance.

'Turn thee, Wolf of Wales,' said Berenger, 'and abide, if thou darest, one blow of a good knight's sword! Raymond Berenger spits at thee and thy banner.'

'False Norman churl!' said Gwenwyn, swinging around his head a mace of prodigious weight, and already clottered with blood, 'thy iron head-piece shall ill protect thy lying tongue, with which I will this day feed the ravens!'

Raymond made no farther answer, but pushed his horse towards the Prince, who advanced to meet him with equal readiness. But ere they came within reach of each other's weapons, a Welsh champion, devoted like the Romans who opposed the elephants of Pyrrhus, finding that the armour of Raymond's horse resisted the repeated thrusts of his spear, threw himself under the animal, and stabbed him in the belly with his long knife. The noble horse reared and fell, crushing with his weight the Briton who had wounded him; the helmet of the rider burst its clasps in the fall, and rolled away from his head, giving to view his noble features and grey hairs. He made more than one effort to extricate himself from the fallen horse, but, ere he could succeed, received his death's-wound from the hand of Gwenwyn, who hesitated not to strike him down with his mace while in the act of attempting to rise.

During the whole of this bloody day, Dennis Morolt's horse had kept pace for pace, and his arm blow for blow, with his master's. It seemed as if two different bodies had been moving under one act of volition. He husbanded his strength or put it forth exactly as he observed his knight did, and was close by his side when he made the last deadly effort. At that fatal moment when Raymond Berenger rushed on the chief, the brave squire forced his way up to the standard, and, grasping it firmly, struggled for possession of it with a gigantic Briton, to whose care it had been confided, and who now exerted his utmost strength to defend it. But, even while engaged in this mortal struggle, the eye of Morolt scarcely left his master; and when he saw him fall, his own force seemed

by sympathy to abandon him, and the British champion had no longer any trouble in laying him prostrate among the slain.

The victory of the British was now complete. Upon the fall of their leader, the followers of Raymond Berenger would willingly have fled or surrendered. But the first was impossible, so closely had they been enveloped; and in the cruel wars maintained by the Welsh upon their frontiers quarter to the vanquished was out of question. A few of the men-at-arms were lucky enough to disentangle themselves from the tumult, and, not even attempting to enter the castle, fled in various directions, to carry their own fears among the inhabitants of the marches, by announcing the loss of the battle, and the fate of the far-renowned Raymond Berenger.

The archers of the fallen leader, as they had never been so deeply involved in the combat, which had been chiefly maintained by the cavalry, became now, in their turn, the sole object of the enemy's attack. But when they saw the multitude come roaring towards them like a sea with all its waves, they abandoned the bank which they had hitherto bravely defended, and began a regular retreat to the castle in the best order which they could, as the only remaining means of securing their lives. A few of their light-footed enemies attempted to intercept them, during the execution of this prudent manœuvre, by outstripping them in their march, and throwing themselves into the hollow way which led to the castle, to oppose their retreat. But the coolness of the English archers, accustomed to extremities of every kind, supported them on the present occasion. While a part of them, armed with glaives and bills, dislodged the Welsh from the hollow way, the others, facing in the opposite direction, and parted into divisions, which alternately halted and retreated, maintained such a countenance as to check pursuit, and exchange a severe discharge of missiles with the Welsh, by which both parties were considerable sufferers.

At length, having left more than two-thirds of their brave companions behind, the yeomanry attained the point which, being commanded by arrows and engines from the battlements, might be considered as that of comparative safety. A volley of large stones and square-headed bolts of great size and thickness effectually stopped the farther progress of the pursuit, and those who had led it drew back their desultory forces to the plain, where, with shouts of jubilee and exultation, their countrymen were employed in securing the plunder

of the field; while some, impelled by hatred and revenge, mangled and mutilated the limbs of the dead Normans, in a manner unworthy of their national cause and their own courage. The fearful yells with which this dreadful work was consummated, while it struck horror into the minds of the slender garrison of the Garde Doloureuse, inspired them at the same time with the resolution rather to defend the fortress to the last extremity than to submit to the mercy of so vengeful an enemy.[1]

[1] See Courage of the Welsh. Note 5.

CHAPTER V

That baron he to his castle fled,
To Barnard Castle then fled he;
The uttermost walls were eathe to win,
The earls have won them speedilie.
The uttermost walls were stone and brick;
But though they won them soon anon,
Long ere they won the inmost walls,
For they were hewn in rock of stone.

PERCY'S *Relics of Ancient Poetry.*

THE unhappy fate of the battle was soon evident to the anxious spectators upon the watch-towers of the Garde Doloureuse, which name the castle that day too well deserved. With difficulty the confessor mastered his own emotions to control those of the females on whom he attended, and who were now joined in their lamentation by many others — women, children, and infirm old men, the relatives of those whom they saw engaged in this unavailing contest. These helpless beings had been admitted to the castle for security's sake, and they had now thronged to the battlements, from which Father Aldrovand found difficulty in making them descend, aware that the sight of them on the towers, that should have appeared lined with armed men, would be an additional encouragement to the exertions of the assailants. He urged the Lady Eveline to set an example to this group of helpless, yet untractable, mourners.

Preserving, at least endeavouring to preserve, even in the extremity of grief, that composure which the manners of the times enjoined — for chivalry had its stoicism as well as philosophy — Eveline replied with a voice which she would fain have rendered firm, and which was tremulous in her despite — 'Yes, father, you say well — there is no longer aught left for maidens to look upon. Warlike meed and honoured deed sunk when yonder white plume touched the bloody ground. Come, maidens, there is no longer aught left us to see — to mass, to mass — the tourney is over!'

There was wildness in her tone, and when she rose, with the air of one who would lead out a procession, she staggered, and would have fallen but for the support of the confessor. Hastily wrapping her head in her mantle, as if ashamed of the agony of grief which she could not restrain, and of which her sobs and the low moaning sounds that issued from under the folds enveloping her face declared the excess, she suffered Father Aldrovand to conduct her whither he would.

'Our gold,' he said, 'has changed to brass, our silver to dross, our wisdom to folly; it is His will who confounds the counsels of the wise, and shortens the arm of the mighty. To the chapel — to the chapel, Lady Eveline, and instead of vain repining, let us pray to God and the saints to turn away their displeasure, and to save the feeble remnant from the jaws of the devouring wolf.'

Thus speaking, he half led, half supported Eveline, who was at the moment almost incapable of thought and action, to the castle-chapel, where, sinking before the altar, she assumed the attitude at least of devotion, though her thoughts, despite the pious words which her tongue faltered out mechanically, were upon the field of battle, beside the body of her slaughtered parent. The rest of the mourners imitated their young lady in her devotional posture, and in the absence of her thoughts. The consciousness that so many of the garrison had been cut off in Raymond's incautious sally added to their sorrows the sense of personal insecurity, which was exaggerated by the cruelties which were too often exercised by the enemy, who, in the heat of victory, were accustomed to spare neither sex nor age.

The monk, however, assumed among them the tone of authority which his character warranted, rebuked their wailing and ineffectual complaints, and having, as he thought, brought them to such a state of mind as better became their condition, he left them to their private devotions, to indulge his own anxious curiosity by inquiring into the defences of the castle. Upon the outward walls he found William Hurlstock, who, having done the office of a good and skilful engineer in the mode of managing his artillery, and beating back, as we have already seen, the advanced guard of the enemy, was now with his own hand measuring out to his little garrison no stinted allowance of wine.

'Have a care, good William,' said the father, 'that thou dost not exceed in this matter. Wine is, thou knowest, like fire and water, an excellent servant, but a very bad master.'

'It will be long ere it overflow the deep and solid skulls of my countrymen,' said Wilkin Flammock. 'Our Flemish courage is like our Flanders horses — the one needs the spur, and the other must have a taste of the wine-pot; but, credit me, father, they are of an enduring generation, and will not shrink in the washing. But, indeed, if I were to give the knaves a cup more than enough, it were not altogether amiss, since they are like to have a platter the less.'

'How do you mean?' cried the monk, starting. 'I trust in the saints the provisions have been well cared for?'

'Not so well as in your convent, good father,' replied Wilkin, with the same immovable stolidity of countenance. 'We had kept, as you know, too jolly a Christmas to have a very fat Easter. Yon Welsh hounds, who helped to eat up our victuals, are now like to get into our hold for the lack of them.'

'Thou talkest mere folly,' answered the monk: 'orders were last evening given by our lord — whose soul God assoilzie! — to fetch in the necessary supplies from the country around.'

'Ay, but the Welsh were too sharp set to permit us to do that at our ease this morning which should have been done weeks and months since. Our lord deceased, if deceased he be, was one of those who trusted to the edge of the sword, and even so hath come of it. Commend me to a cross-bow and a well-victualled castle, if I must needs fight at all. You look pale, my good father, a cup of wine will revive you.'

The monk motioned away from him the untasted cup which Wilkin pressed him to with clownish civility. 'We have now, indeed,' he said, 'no refuge, save in prayer!'

'Most true, good father,' again replied the impassible Fleming; 'pray therefore as much as you will. I will content myself with fasting, which will come whether I will or no.' At this moment a horn was heard before the gate. 'Look to the portcullis and the gate, ye knaves! What news, Neil Hansen?'

'A messenger from the Welsh tarries at the mill-hill, just within shot of the cross-bows; he has a white flag, and demands admittance.'

'Admit him not, upon thy life, till we be prepared for him,' said Wilkin. 'Bend the bonny mangonel upon the place, and shoot him if he dare to stir from the spot where he stands till we get all prepared to receive him,' said Flammock, in his native language. 'And Neil, thou houndsfoot, bestir thyself — let every pike, lance, and pole in the castle be ranged along the battlements, and pointed through the shot-holes; cut up

some tapestry into the shape of banners, and show them from the highest towers. Be ready, when I give a signal, to strike "naker" and blow trumpets, if we have any; if not, some cow-horns — anything for a noise. And harkye, Neil Hansen, do you and four or five of your fellows go to the armoury and slip on coats of mail: our Netherlandish corslets do not appal them so much. Then let the Welsh thief be blindfolded and brought in amongst us. Do you hold up your heads and keep silence — leave me to deal with him — only have a care there be no English among us.'

The monk, who in his travels had acquired some slight knowledge of the Flemish language, had wellnigh started when he heard the last article in Wilkin's instructions to his countryman, but commanded himself, although a little surprised, both at this suspicious circumstance and at the readiness and dexterity with which the rough-hewn Fleming seemed to adapt his preparations to the rules of war and of sound policy.

Wilkin, on his part, was not very certain whether the monk had not heard and understood more of what he said to his countryman than what he had intended. As if to lull asleep any suspicion which Father Aldrovand might entertain, he repeated to him in English most of the directions which he had given, adding, 'Well, good father, what think you of it?'

'Excellent well,' answered the father, 'and done as you had practised war from the cradle, instead of weaving broad-cloth.'

'Nay, spare not your gibes, father,' answered Wilkin. 'I know full well that you English think that Flemings have nought in their brain-pan but sodden beef and cabbage; yet you see there goes wisdom to weaving of webs.'

'Right, Master Wilkin Flammock,' answered the father; 'but, good Fleming, wilt thou tell me what answer thou wilt make to the Welsh prince's summons?'

'Reverend father, first tell me what the summons will be,' replied the Fleming.

'To surrender this castle upon the instant,' answered the monk. 'What will be your reply?'

'My answer will be — "Nay, unless upon good composition."'

'How, sir Fleming! dare you mention composition and the Castle of the Garde Doloureuse in one sentence?' exclaimed the monk

'Not if I may do better,' answered the Fleming. 'But would your reverence have me dally until the question amongst

the garrison be, whether a plump priest or a fat Fleming will be the better flesh to furnish their shambles?'

'Pshaw!' replied Father Aldrovand, 'thou canst not mean such folly. Relief must arrive within twenty-four hours at farthest. Raymond Berenger expected it for certain within such a space.'

'Raymond Berenger hath been deceived this morning in more matters than one,' answered the Fleming.

'Hark thee, Flanderkin,' answered the monk, whose retreat from the world had not altogether quenched his military habits and propensities, 'I counsel thee to deal uprightly in this matter, as thou dost regard thine own life; for here are as many English left alive, notwithstanding the slaughter of the day, as may well suffice to fling the Flemish bull-frogs into the castle-ditch, should they have cause to think thou meanest falsely in the keeping of this castle and the defence of the Lady Eveline.'

'Let not your reverence be moved with unnecessary and idle fears,' replied Wilkin Flammock. 'I am castellane in this house, by command of its lord, and what I hold for the advantage of mine service, that will I do.'

'But I,' said the angry monk — 'I am the servant of the Pope — the chaplain of this castle, with power to bind and to unloose. I fear me thou art no true Christian, Wilkin Flammock, but dost lean to the heresy of the mountaineers. Thou hast refused to take the blessed cross; thou hast breakfasted, and drunk both ale and wine, ere thou hast heard mass. Thou art not to be trusted, man, and I will not trust thee: I demand to be present at the conference betwixt thee and the Welshman.'

'It may not be, good father,' said Wilkin, with the same smiling, heavy countenance which he maintained on all occasions of life, however urgent. 'It is true, as thou sayest, good father, that I have mine own reasons for not marching quite so far as the gates of Jericho at present; and lucky I have such reasons, since I had not else been here to defend the gate of the Garde Doloureuse. It is also true that I may have been sometimes obliged to visit my mills earlier than the chaplain was called by his zeal to the altar, and that my stomach brooks not working ere I break my fast. But for this, father, I have paid a mulct even to your worshipful reverence, and methinks, since you are pleased to remember the confession so exactly, you should not forget the penance and the absolution.'

The monk, in alluding to the secrets of the confessional, had gone a step beyond what the rules of his order and of the church permitted. He was baffled by the Fleming's reply, and finding him unmoved by the charge of heresy, he could only answer in some confusion, 'You refuse, then, to admit me to your conference with the Welshman?'

'Reverend father,' said Wilkin, 'it altogether respecteth secular matters. If aught of religious tenor should intervene, you shall be summoned without delay.'

'I will be there in spite of thee, thou Flemish ox,' muttered the monk to himself, but in a tone not to be heard by the bystanders; and so speaking, he left the battlements.

Wilkin Flammock, a few minutes afterwards, having first seen that all was arranged on the battlements, so as to give an imposing idea of a strength which did not exist, descended to a small guard-room, betwixt the outer and inner gate, where he was attended by half a dozen of his own people, disguised in the Norman armour which they had found in the armoury of the castle — their strong, tall, and bulky forms and motionless postures causing them to look rather like trophies of some past age than living and existing soldiers. Surrounded by these huge and inanimate figures, in a little vaulted room which almost excluded daylight, Flammock received the Welsh envoy, who was led in blindfolded betwixt two Flemings; yet not so carefully watched but that they permitted him to have a glimpse of the preparations on the battlements, which had, in fact, been made chiefly for the purpose of imposing on him. For the same purpose an occasional clatter of arms was made without; voices were heard as if officers were going their rounds; and other sounds of active preparation seemed to announce that a numerous and regular garrison was preparing to receive an attack.

When the bandage was removed from Jorworth's eyes — for the same individual who had formerly brought Gwenwyn's offer of alliance now bare his summons of surrender — he looked haughtily around him, and demanded to whom he was to deliver the commands of his master, the Gwenwyn, son of Cyveiliock, Prince of Powys.

'His highness,' answered Flammock, with his usual smiling indifference of manner, 'must be contented to treat with Wilkin Flammock of the fulling-mills, deputed governor of the Garde Doloureuse.'

'Thou deputed governor!' exclaimed Jorworth — 'thou! a

Low-Country weaver! — it is impossible. Low as they are, the English crogan cannot have sunk to a point so low as to be commanded by *thee!* These men seem English; to them I will deliver my message.'

'You may if you will,' replied Wilkin, 'but if they return you any answer save by signs, you shall call me *schelm.*'

'Is this true?' said the Welsh envoy, looking towards the men-at-arms, as they seemed, by whom Flammock was attended — 'are you really come to this pass? I thought that the mere having been born on British earth, though the children of spoilers and invaders, had inspired you with too much pride to brook the yoke of a base mechanic. Or, if you are not courageous, should you not be cautious? Well speaks the proverb, "Woe to him that will trust a stranger!" Still mute — still silent? Answer me by word or sign. Do you really call and acknowledge him as your leader?'

The men in armour with one accord nodded their casques in reply to Jorworth's question, and then remained motionless as before.

The Welshman, with the acute genius of his country, suspected there was something in this which he could not entirely comprehend, but, preparing himself to be upon his guard, he proceeded as follows: 'Be it as it may, I care not who hears the message of my sovereign, since it brings pardon and mercy to the inhabitants of this Castell an Carrig,[1] which you have called the Garde Doloureuse, to cover the usurpation of the territory by the change of the name. Upon surrender of the same to the Prince of Powys, with its dependencies, and with the arms which it contains, and with the maiden Eveline Berenger, all within the castle shall depart unmolested, and have safe-conduct wheresoever they will, to go beyond the marches of the Cymry.'

'And how, if we obey not this summons?' said the imperturbable Wilkin Flammock.

'Then shall your portion be with Raymond Berenger, your late leader,' replied Jorworth, his eyes, while he was speaking, glancing with the vindictive ferocity which dictated his answer. 'So many strangers as be here amongst ye, so many bodies to the ravens, so many heads to the gibbet! It is long since the kites have had such a banquet of lurdane Flemings and false Saxons.'

'Friend Jorworth,' said Wilkin, 'if such be thy only message,

[1] Castle of the Craig.

bear mine answer back to thy master, "That wise men trust not to the words of others that safety which they can secure by their own deeds. We have walls high and strong enough, deep moats, and plenty of munition, both long-bow and arblast. We will keep the castle, trusting the castle will keep us, till God shall send us succour."'

'Do not peril your lives on such an issue,' said the Welsh emissary, changing his language to the Flemish, which, from occasional communication with those of that nation in Pembrokeshire, he spoke fluently, and which he now adopted, as if to conceal the purport of his discourse from the supposed English in the apartment. 'Hark thee hither,' he proceeded, 'good Fleming. Knowest thou not that he in whom is your trust, the Constable De Lacy, hath bound himself by his vow to engage in no quarrel till he crosses the sea, and cannot come to your aid without perjury? He and the other Lords Marchers have drawn their forces far northward to join the host of Crusaders. What will it avail you to put us to the toil and trouble of a long siege, when you can hope no rescue?'

'And what will it avail me more,' said Wilkin, answering in his native language, and looking at the Welshman fixedly, yet with a countenance from which all expression seemed studiously banished, and which exhibited, upon features otherwise tolerable, a remarkable compound of dulness and simplicity — 'what will it avail me whether your trouble be great or small?'

'Come, friend Flammock,' said the Welshman, 'frame not thyself more unapprehensive than nature hath formed thee. The glen is dark, but a sunbeam can light the side of it. Thy utmost efforts cannot prevent the fall of this castle; but thou mayst hasten it, and the doing so shall avail thee much.' Thus speaking, he drew close up to Wilkin, and sunk his voice to an insinuating whisper, as he said, 'Never did the withdrawing of a bar or the raising of a portcullis bring such vantage to Fleming as they may to thee, if thou wilt.'

'I only know,' said Wilkin, 'that the drawing the one and the dropping the other have cost me my whole worldly substance.'

'Fleming, it shall be compensated to thee with an overflowing measure. The liberality of Gwenwyn is as the summer rain.'

'My whole mills and buildings have been this morning burnt to the earth ——'

'Thou shalt have a thousand marks of silver, man, in the

place of thy goods,' said the Welshman; but the Fleming continued, without seeming to hear him, to number up his losses.

'My lands are forayed, twenty kine driven off, and ——'

'Threescore shall replace them,' interrupted Jorworth, 'chosen from the most bright-skinned of the spoil.'

'But my daughter — but the Lady Eveline ——' said the Fleming, with some slight change in his monotonous voice, which seemed to express doubt and perplexity. 'You are cruel conquerors, and ——'

'To those who resist us we are fearful,' said Jorworth, 'but not to such as shall deserve clemency by surrender. Gwenwyn will forget the contumelies of Raymond, and raise his daughter to high honour among the daughters of the Cymry. For thine own child, form but a wish for her advantage, and it shall be fulfilled to the uttermost. Now, Fleming, we understand each other.'

'I understand thee, at least,' said Flammock.

'And I thee, I trust?' said Jorworth, bending his keen, wild blue eye on the stolid and unexpressive face of the Netherlander, like an eager student who seeks to discover some hidden and mysterious meaning in a passage of a classic author, the direct import of which seems trite and trivial.

'You believe that you understand me,' said Wilkin; 'but here lies the difficulty — which of us shall trust the other?'

'Darest thou ask?' answered Jorworth. 'Is it for thee or such as thee to express doubt of the purposes of the Prince of Powys?'

'I know them not, good Jorworth, but through thee; and well I wot thou art not one who will let thy traffic miscarry for want of aid from the breath of thy mouth.'

'As I am a Christian man,' said Jorworth, hurrying asseveration on asseveration — 'by the soul of my father — by the faith of my mother — by the black rood of ——'

'Stop, good Jorworth; thou heapest thine oaths too thickly on each other for me to value them to the right estimate,' said Flammock: 'that which is so lightly pledged is sometimes not thought worth redeeming. Some part of the promised guerdon in hand the whilst were worth an hundred oaths.'

'Thou suspicious churl, darest thou doubt my word?'

'No, by no means,' answered Wilkin; 'ne'ertheless, I will believe thy deed more readily.'

'To the point, Fleming,' said Jorworth. 'What wouldst thou have of me?'

'Let me have some present sight of the money thou didst promise, and I will think of the rest of thy proposal.'

'Base silver-broker!' answered Jorworth, 'thinkest thou the Prince of Powys has as many money-bags as the merchants of thy land of sale and barter? He gathers treasures by his conquests, as the waterspout sucks up water by its strength; but it is to disperse them among his followers, as the cloudy column restores its contents to earth and ocean. The silver that I promise thee has yet to be gathered out of the Saxon chests — nay, the casket of Berenger himself must be ransacked to make up the tale.'

'Methinks I could do that myself, having full power in the castle, and so save you a labour,' said the Fleming.

'True,' answered Jorworth, 'but it would be at the expense of a cord and a noose, whether the Welsh took the place or the Normans relieved it: the one would expect their booty entire, the other their countrymen's treasures to be delivered undiminished.'

'I may not gainsay that,' said the Fleming. 'Well, say I were content to trust you thus far, why not return my cattle, which are in your own hands and at your disposal? If you do not pleasure me in something beforehand, what can I expect of you afterwards?'

'I would pleasure you in a greater matter,' answered the equally suspicious Welshman. 'But what would it avail thee to have thy cattle within the fortress? They can be better cared for on the plain beneath.'

'In faith,' replied the Fleming, 'thou sayst truth — they will be but a trouble to us here, where we have so many already provided for the use of the garrison. And yet, when I consider it more closely, we have enough of forage to maintain all we have, and more. Now, my cattle are of a peculiar stock, brought from the rich pastures of Flanders, and I desire to have them restored ere your axes and Welsh hooks be busy with their hides.'

'You shall have them this night, hide and horn,' said Jorworth; 'it is but a small earnest of a great boon.'

'Thanks to your munificence,' said the Fleming; 'I am a simple-minded man, and bound my wishes to the recovery of my own property.'

'Thou wilt be ready, then, to deliver the castle?' said Jorworth.

'Of that we will talk farther to-morrow,' said Wilkin

Flammock; 'if these English and Normans should suspect such a purpose, we should have wild work: they must be fully dispersed ere I can hold farther communication on the subject. Meanwhile, I pray thee, depart suddenly, and as if offended with the tenor of our discourse.'

'Yet would I fain know something more fixed and absolute,' said Jorworth.

'Impossible — impossible,' said the Fleming; 'see you not yonder tall fellow begins already to handle his dagger. Go hence in haste, and angrily — and forget not the cattle.'

'I will not forget them,' said Jorworth; 'but if thou keep not faith with us ——'

So speaking, he left the apartment with a gesture of menace, partly really directed to Wilkin himself, partly assumed in consequence of his advice. Flammock replied in English, as if that all around might understand what he said —:

'Do thy worst, sir Welshman! I am a true man; I defy the proposals of rendition, and will hold out this castle to thy shame and thy master's! Here — let him be blindfolded once more, and returned in safety to his attendants without; the next Welshman who appears before the gate of the Garde Doloureuse shall be more sharply received.'

The Welshman was blindfolded and withdrawn, when, as Wilkin Flammock himself left the guard-room, one of the seeming men-at-arms who had been present at this interview said in his ear, in English, 'Thou art a false traitor, Flammock, and shalt die a traitor's death!'

Startled at this, the Fleming would have questioned the man farther, but he had disappeared so soon as the words were uttered. Flammock was disconcerted by this circumstance, which showed him that his interview with Jorworth had been observed, and its purpose known or conjectured, by some one who was a stranger to his confidence, and might thwart his intentions; and he quickly after learned that this was the case.

CHAPTER VI

Blessed Mary, mother dear,
To a maiden bend thine ear;
Virgin, undefiled, to thee
A wretched virgin bends the knee.

Hymn to the Virgin.

THE daughter of the slaughtered Raymond had descended from the elevated station whence she had beheld the field of battle, in the agony of grief natural to a child whose eyes have beheld the death of an honoured and beloved father. But her station, and the principles of chivalry in which she had been trained up, did not permit any prolonged or needless indulgence of inactive sorrow. In raising the young and beautiful of the female sex to the rank of princesses, or rather goddesses, the spirit of that singular system exacted from them, in requital, a tone of character and a line of conduct superior, and something contradictory, to that of natural or merely human feeling. Its heroines frequently resembled portraits shown by an artificial light — strong and luminous, and which placed in high relief the objects on which it was turned; but having still something of adventitious splendour, which, compared with that of the natural day, seemed glaring and exaggerated.

It was not permitted to the orphan of the Garde Doloureuse, the daughter of a line of heroes, whose stem was to be found in the race of Thor, Balder, Odin, and other deified warriors of the North, whose beauty was the theme of a hundred minstrels, and her eyes the leading star of half the chivalry of the warlike marches of Wales, to mourn her sire with the ineffectual tears of a village maiden. Young as she was, and horrible as was the incident which she had but that instant witnessed, it was not altogether so appalling to her as to a maiden whose eye had not been accustomed to the rough, and often fatal, sports of chivalry, and whose residence had not been among scenes and men where war and death had been the unceasing

theme of every tongue, whose imagination had not been familiarised with wild and bloody events, or, finally, who had not been trained up to consider an honourable 'death under shield,' as that of a field of battle was termed, as a more desirable termination to the life of a warrior than that lingering and unhonoured fate which comes slowly on, to conclude the listless and helpless inactivity of prolonged old age. Eveline, while she wept for her father, felt her bosom glow when she recollected that he died in the blaze of his fame, and amidst heaps of his slaughtered enemies; and when she thought of the exigencies of her own situation, it was with the determination to defend her own liberty, and to avenge her father's death, by every means which Heaven had left within her power.

The aids of religion were not forgotten; and, according to the custom of the times and the doctrines of the Roman Church, she endeavoured to propitiate the favour of Heaven by vows as well as prayers. In a small crypt, or oratory, adjoining to the chapel was hung over an altar-piece, on which a lamp constantly burned, a small picture of the Virgin Mary, revered as a household and peculiar deity by the family of Berenger, one of whose ancestors had brought it from the Holy Land, whither he had gone upon pilgrimage. It was of the period of the Lower Empire, a Grecian painting, not unlike those which in Catholic countries are often imputed to the Evangelist Luke. The crypt in which it was placed was accounted a shrine of uncommon sanctity — nay, supposed to have displayed miraculous powers; and Eveline, by the daily garland of flowers which she offered before the painting, and by the constant prayers with which they were accompanied, had constituted herself the peculiar votaress of Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, for so the picture was named.

Now, apart from others, alone, and in secrecy, sinking in the extremity of her sorrow before the shrine of her patroness, she besought the protection of kindred purity for the defence of her freedom and honour, and invoked vengeance on the wild and treacherous chieftain who had slain her father, and was now beleaguering her place of strength. Not only did she vow a large donative in lands to the shrine of the protectress whose aid she implored, but the oath passed her lips (even though they faltered, and though something within her remonstrated against the vow), that whatsoever favoured knight Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse might employ for her rescue should

obtain from her in guerdon whatever boon she might honourably grant, were it that of her virgin hand at the holy altar. Taught as she was to believe, by the assurances of many a knight, that such a surrender was the highest boon which Heaven could bestow, she felt as discharging a debt of gratitude when she placed herself entirely at the disposal of the pure and blessed patroness in whose aid she confided. Perhaps there lurked in this devotion some earthly hope of which she was herself scarce conscious, and which reconciled her to the indefinite sacrifice thus freely offered. The Virgin (this flattering hope might insinuate), kindest and most benevolent of patronesses, will use compassionately the power resigned to her, and *he* will be the favoured champion of Maria upon whom her votaress would most willingly confer favour.

But if there was such a hope, as something selfish will often mingle with our noblest and purest emotions, it arose unconscious of Eveline herself, who, in the full assurance of implicit faith, and fixing on the representative of her adoration eyes in which the most earnest supplication, the most humble confidence, struggled with unbidden tears, was perhaps more beautiful than when, young as she was, she was selected to bestow the prize of chivalry in the lists of Chester. It was no wonder that, in such a moment of high excitation, when prostrated in devotion before a being of whose power to protect her, and to make her protection assured by a visible sign, she doubted nothing, the Lady Eveline conceived she saw with her own eyes the acceptance of her vow. As she gazed on the picture with an overstrained eye, and an imagination heated with enthusiasm, the expression seemed to alter from the hard outline fashioned by the Greek painter: the eyes appeared to become animated, and to return with looks of compassion the suppliant entreaties of the votaress; and the mouth visibly arranged itself into a smile of inexpressible sweetness. It even seemed to her that the head made a gentle inclination.

Overpowered by supernatural awe at appearances of which her faith permitted her not to question the reality, the Lady Eveline folded her arms on her bosom and prostrated her forehead on the pavement, as the posture most fitting to listen to divine communication.

But her vision went not so far: there was neither sound nor voice, and when, after stealing her eyes all around the crypt in which she knelt, she again raised them to the figure of Our Lady, the features seemed to be in the form in which

the limner had sketched them, saving that, to Eveline's imagination, they still retained an august and yet gracious expression, which she had not before remarked upon the countenance. With awful reverence, almost amounting to fear, yet comforted and even elated with the visitation she had witnessed, the maiden repeated again and again the orisons which she thought most grateful to the ear of her benefactress; and, rising at length, retired backwards, as from the presence of a sovereign, until she attained the outer chapel.

Here one or two females still knelt before the saints which the walls and niches presented for adoration; but the rest of the terrified suppliants, too anxious to prolong their devotions, had dispersed through the castle to learn tidings of their friends, and to obtain some refreshment, or at least some place of repose, for themselves and their families.

Bowing her head, and muttering an ave to each saint as she passed his image (for impending danger makes men observant of the rites of devotion), the Lady Eveline had almost reached the door of the chapel, when a man-at-arms, as he seemed, entered hastily; and with a louder voice than suited the holy place, unless when need was most urgent, demanded the Lady Eveline. Impressed with the feelings of veneration which the late scene had produced, she was about to rebuke his military rudeness, when he spoke again, and in anxious haste, 'Daughter, we are betrayed!' and though the form, and the coat of mail which covered it, were those of a soldier, the voice was that of Father Aldrovand, who, eager and anxious at the same time, disengaged himself from the mail hood and showed his countenance.

'Father,' she said, 'what means this? Have you forgotten the confidence in Heaven which you are wont to recommend, that you bear other arms than your order assigns to you?'

'It may come to that ere long,' said Father Aldrovand; 'for I was a soldier ere I was a monk. But now I have donn'd this harness to discover treachery, not to resist force. Ah! my beloved daughter, we are dreadfully beset — foemen without — traitors within! The false Fleming, Wilkin Flammock, is treating for the surrender of the castle.'

'Who dares say so?' said a veiled female, who had been kneeling unnoticed in a sequestered corner of the chapel, but who now started up and came boldly betwixt Lady Eveline and the monk.

'Go hence, thou saucy minion,' said the monk, surprised at this bold interruption; 'this concerns not thee.'

'But it *doth* concern me,' said the damsel, throwing back her veil, and discovering the juvenile countenance of Rose, the daughter of Wilkin Flammock, her eyes sparkling, and her cheeks blushing with anger, the vehemence of which made a singular contrast with the very fair complexion and almost infantine features of the speaker, whose whole form and figure was that of a girl who has scarce emerged from childhood, and indeed whose general manners were as gentle and bashful as they now seemed bold, impassioned, and undaunted. 'Doth it not concern me,' she said, 'that my father's honest name should be tainted with treason? Doth it not concern the stream when the fountain is troubled? It *doth* concern me, and I will know the author of the calumny.'

'Damsel,' said Eveline, 'restrain thy useless passion; the good father, though he cannot intentionally calumniate thy father, speaks, it may be, from false report.'

'As I am an unworthy priest,' said the father, 'I speak from the report of my own ears. Upon the oath of my order, myself heard this Wilkin Flammock chaffering with the Welshman for the surrender of the Garde Doloureuse. By help of this hauberk and mail hood, I gained admittance to a conference where he thought there were no English ears. They spoke Flemish too, but I knew the jargon of old.'

'The Flemish,' said the angry maiden, whose headstrong passion led her to speak first in answer to the last insult offered, 'is no jargon like your piebald English, half Norman, half Saxon, but a noble Gothic tongue, spoken by the brave warriors who fought against the Roman kaisers, when Britain bent the neck to them. And as for this he has said of Wilkin Flammock,' she continued, collecting her ideas into more order as she went on, 'believe it not, my dearest lady: but as you value the honour of your own noble father, confide as in the Evangelists, in the honesty of mine.' This she spoke with an imploring tone of voice, mingled with sobs, as if her heart were breaking.

Eveline endeavoured to soothe her attendant. 'Rose,' she said, 'in this evil time suspicions will light on the best men, and misunderstandings will arise among the best friends. Let us hear the good father state what he hath to charge upon your parent. Fear not but that Wilkin shall be heard in his defence. Thou wert wont to be quiet and reasonable.'

'I am neither quiet nor reasonable on this matter,' said Rose, with redoubled indignation; 'and it is ill of you, lady, to

listen to the falsehoods of that reverend mummer, who is neither true priest nor true soldier. But I will fetch one who shall confront him either in casque or cowl.'

So saying, she went hastily out of the chapel, while the monk, after some pedantic circumlocution, acquainted the Lady Eveline with what he had overheard betwixt Jorworth and Wilkin; and proposed to her to draw together the few English who were in the castle, and take possession of the innermost square tower — a keep which, as usual in Gothic fortresses of the Norman period, was situated so as to make considerable defence, even after the exterior works of the castle, which it commanded, were in the hand of the enemy.

'Father,' said Eveline, still confident in the vision she had lately witnessed, 'this were good counsel in extremity; but otherwise, it were to create the very evil we fear, by setting our garrison at odds amongst themselves. I have a strong, and not unwarranted, confidence, good father, in our blessed Lady of this Garde Doloureuse, that we shall attain at once vengeance on our barbarous enemies and escape from our present jeopardy; and I call you to witness the vow I have made, that to him whom Our Lady should employ to work us succour I will refuse nothing, were it my father's inheritance or the hand of his daughter.'

'*Ave Maria! Ave Regina Cœli!*' said the priest; 'on a rock more sure you could not have founded your trust. But, daughter,' he continued, after the proper ejaculation had been made, 'have you never heard, even by a hint, that there was a treaty for your hand betwixt our much honoured lord, of whom we are cruelly bereft — may God assoilzie his soul! — and the great house of Lacy?'

'Something I may have heard,' said Eveline, dropping her eyes, while a slight tinge suffused her cheek; 'but I refer me to the disposal of Our Lady of Succour and Consolation.'

As she spoke, Rose entered the chapel with the same vivacity she had shown in leaving it, leading by the hand her father, whose sluggish though firm step, vacant countenance, and heavy demeanour formed the strongest contrast to the rapidity of her motions, and the anxious animation of her address. Her task of dragging him forward might have reminded the spectator of some of those ancient monuments on which a small cherub, singularly inadequate to the task, is often represented as hoisting upward towards the empyrean the fleshly bulk of some ponderous tenant of the tomb, whose disproportioned

weight bids fair to render ineffectual the benevolent and spirited exertions of its fluttering guide and assistant.

'Roschen — my child, what grieves thee?' said the Netherlander, as he yielded to his daughter's violence with a smile, which, being on the countenance of a father, had more of expression and feeling than those which seemed to have made their constant dwelling upon his lips.

'Here stands my father,' said the impatient maiden; 'impeach him with treason, who can or dare? There stands Wilkin Flammock, son of Dieterick, the cramer of Antwerp; let those accuse him to his face who slandered him behind his back!'

'Speak, Father Aldrovand,' said the Lady Eveline; 'we are young in our lordship, and, alas! the duty hath descended upon us in an evil hour; yet we will, so may God and Our Lady help us, hear and judge of your accusation to the utmost of our power.'

'This Wilkin Flammock,' said the monk, 'however bold he hath made himself in villainy, dares not deny that I heard him with my own ears treat for the surrender of the castle.'

'Strike him, father!' said the indignant Rose — 'strike the disguised mummer! The steel hauberk may be struck, though not the monk's frock — strike him, or tell him that he lies foully!'

'Peace, Roschen, thou art mad,' said her father, angrily; 'the monk hath more truth than sense about him, and I would his ears had been farther off when he thrust them into what concerned him not.'

Rose's countenance fell when she heard her father bluntly avow the treasonable communication of which she had thought him incapable; she dropt the hand by which she had dragged him into the chapel, and stared on the Lady Eveline with eyes which seemed starting from their sockets, and a countenance from which the blood, with which it was so lately highly coloured, had retreated to garrison the heart.

Eveline looked upon the culprit with a countenance in which sweetness and dignity were mingled with sorrow. 'Wilkin,' she said, 'I could not have believed this. What! on the very day of thy confiding benefactor's death, canst thou have been tampering with his murderers, to deliver up the castle and betray thy trust? But I will not upbraid thee. I deprive thee of the trust reposed in so unworthy a person, and appoint thee to be kept in ward in the western tower till God send us relief, when, it may be, thy daughter's merits shall atone for thy

offences, and save farther punishment. See that our commands be presently obeyed.'

'Yes — yes — yes!' exclaimed Rose, hurrying one word on the other as fast and vehemently as she could articulate. 'Let us go — let us go to the darkest dungeon: darkness befits us better than light.'

The monk, on the other hand, perceiving that the Fleming made no motion to obey the mandate of arrest, came forward, in a manner more suiting his ancient profession and present disguise than his spiritual character; and with the words, 'I attach thee, Wilkin Flammock, of acknowledged treason to your liege lady,' would have laid hand upon him, had not the Fleming stepped back and warned him off with a menacing and determined gesture, while he said — 'Ye are mad! — all of you English are mad when the moon is full, and my silly girl hath caught the malady. Lady, your honoured father gave me a charge, which I purpose to execute to the best for all parties, and you cannot, being a minor, deprive me of it at your idle pleasure. Father Aldrovand, a monk makes no lawful arrests. Daughter Roschen, hold your peace and dry your eyes — you are a fool.'

'I am — I am,' said Rose, drying her eyes and regaining her elasticity of manner — 'I am indeed a fool, and worse than a fool, for a moment to doubt my father's probity. Confide in him, dearest lady; he is wise though he is grave, and kind though he is plain and homely in his speech. Should he prove false he will fare the worse! for I will plunge myself from the pinnacle of the Warder's Tower to the bottom of the moat, and he shall lose his own daughter for betraying his master's.'

'This is all frenzy,' said the monk. 'Who trusts avowed traitors? Here, Normans — English, to the rescue of your liege lady. Bows and bills — bows and bills!'

'You may spare your throat for your next homily, good father,' said the Netherlander, 'or call in good Flemish, since you understand it, for to no other language will those within hearing reply.'

He then approached the Lady Eveline with a real or affected air of clumsy kindness, and something as nearly approaching to courtesy as his manners and features could assume. He bade her good-night, and, assuring her that he would act for the best, left the chapel. The monk was about to break forth into revilings, but Eveline, with more prudence, checked his zeal.

'I cannot,' she said, 'but hope that this man's intentions are honest ——'

'Now, God's blessings on you, lady, for that very word!' said Rose, eagerly interrupting her, and kissing her hand.

'But if unhappily they are doubtful,' continued Eveline, 'it is not by reproach that we can bring him to a better purpose. Good father, give an eye to the preparations for resistance, and see nought omitted that our means furnish for the defence of the castle.'

'Fear nothing, my dearest daughter,' said Aldrovand: 'there are still some English hearts amongst us, and we will rather kill and eat the Flemings themselves than surrender the castle.'

'That were food as dangerous to come by as bear's venison, father,' answered Rose, bitterly, still on fire with the idea that the monk treated her nation with suspicion and contumely.

On these terms they separated — the women to indulge their fears and sorrows in private grief, or alleviate them by private devotion; the monk to try to discover what were the real purposes of Wilkin Flammock, and to counteract them if possible, should they seem to indicate treachery. His eye, however, though sharpened by strong suspicion, saw nothing to strengthen his fears, excepting that the Fleming had, with considerable military skill, placed the principal posts of the castle in the charge of his own countrymen, which must make any attempt to dispossess him of his present authority both difficult and dangerous. The monk at length retired, summoned by the duties of the evening service, and with the determination to be stirring with the light next morning.

CHAPTER VII

O, sadly shines the morning sun
On leaguer'd castle wall,
When bastion, tower, and battlement,
Seem nodding to their fall.

Old Ballad.

TRUE to his resolution, and telling his beads as he went, that he might lose no time, Father Aldrovand began his rounds in the castle so soon as daylight had touched the top of the eastern horizon. A natural instinct led him first to those stalls which, had the fortress been properly victualled for a siege, ought to have been tenanted by cattle; and great was his delight to see more than a score of fat kine and bullocks in the place which had last night been empty! One of them had already been carried to the shambles, and a Fleming or two, who played butchers on the occasion, were dividing the carcass for the cook's use. The good father had wellnigh cried out, 'A miracle!' but, not to be too precipitate, he limited his transport to a private exclamation in honour of Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse.

'Who talks of lack of provender? — who speaks of surrender now?' he said. 'Here is enough to maintain us till Hugo de Lacy arrives, were he to sail back from Cyprus to our relief. I did purpose to have fasted this morning, as well to save victuals as on a religious score; but the blessing of the saints must not be slighted. Sir cook, let me have half a yard[1] or so of broiled beef presently; bid the pantler send me a manchet, and the butler a cup of wine. I will take a running breakfast on the western battlements.'

At this place, which was rather the weakest point of the Garde Doloureuse, the good father found Wilkin Flammock anxiously superintending the necessary measures of defence. He greeted him courteously, congratulated him on the stock of

[1] See Selling Meat by Measure. Note 6.

provisions with which the castle had been supplied during the night, and was inquiring how they had been so happily introduced through the Welsh besiegers, when Wilkin took the first occasion to interrupt him.

'Of all this another time, good father; but I wish at present, and before other discourse, to consult thee on a matter which presses my conscience, and moreover deeply concerns my worldly estate.'

'Speak on, my excellent son,' said the father, conceiving that he should thus gain the key to Wilkin's real intentions. 'O, a tender conscience is a jewel! and he that will not listen when it saith, "Pour out thy doubts into the ear of the priest," shall one day have his own dolorous outcries choked with fire and brimstone. Thou wert ever of a tender conscience, son Wilkin, though thou hast but a rough and borrel bearing.'

'Well, then,' said Wilkin, 'you are to know, good father, that I have had some dealings with my neighbour, Jan Vanwelt, concerning my daughter Rose, and that he has paid me certain guilders on condition I will match her to him.'

'Pshaw — pshaw! my good son,' said the disappointed confessor, 'this gear can lie over: this is no time for marrying or giving in marriage, when we are all like to be murdered.'

'Nay, but hear me, good father,' said the Fleming, 'for this point of conscience concerns the present case more nearly than you wot of. You must know I have no will to bestow Rose on this same Jan Vanwelt, who is old and of ill conditions; and I would know of you whether I may, in conscience, refuse him my consent?'

'Truly,' said Father Aldrovand, 'Rose is a pretty lass, though somewhat hasty; and I think you may honestly withdraw your consent, always on paying back the guilders you have received.'

'But there lies the pinch, good father,' said the Fleming: 'the refunding this money will reduce me to utter poverty. The Welsh have destroyed my substance; and this handful of money is all, God help me! on which I must begin the world again.'

'Nevertheless, son Wilkin,' said Aldrovand, 'thou must keep thy word, or pay the forfeit; for what saith the text? *Quis habitabit in tabernaculo, quis requiescet in monte sancto?* Who shall ascend to the tabernacle, and dwell in the holy mountain? Is it not answered again, *Qui jurat proximo, et non decipit?* Go to, my son — break not thy plighted word for a little filthy lucre: better is an empty stomach and an hungry heart with a

clear conscience than a fatted ox with iniquity and word-breaking. Sawest thou not our late noble lord, who — may his soul be happy! — chose rather to die in unequal battle, like a true knight, than live a perjured man, though he had but spoken a rash word to a Welshman over a wine-flask?'

'Alas! then,' said the Fleming, 'this is even what I feared! We must e'en render up the castle, or restore to the Welshman, Jorworth, the cattle, by means of which I had schemed to victual and defend it.'

'How — wherefore — what dost thou mean?' said the monk in astonishment. 'I speak to thee of Rose Flammock and Jan Van-devil, or whatever you call him, and you reply with talk about cattle and castles, and I wot not what!'

'So please you, holy father, I did but speak in parables. This castle was the daughter I had promised to deliver over, the Welshman is Jan Vanwelt, and the guilders were the cattle he has sent in, as a part-payment beforehand of my guerdon.'

'Parables!' said the monk, colouring with anger at the trick put on him — 'what has a boor like thee to do with parables? But I forgive thee — I forgive thee.'

'I am therefore to yield the castle to the Welshman, or restore him his cattle?' said the impenetrable Dutchman.

'Sooner yield thy soul to Satan!' replied the monk.

'I fear me it must be the alternative,' said the Fleming; 'for the example of thy honourable lord ——'

'The example of an honourable fool,' answered the monk; then presently subjoined, 'Our Lady be with her servant! This Belgic-brained boor makes me forget what I would say.'

'Nay, but the holy text which your reverence cited to me even now,' continued the Fleming.

'Go to,' said the monk; 'what hast thou to do to presume to think of texts? knowest thou not that the letter of the Scripture slayeth, and that it is the exposition which maketh to live? Art thou not like one who, coming to a physician, conceals from him half the symptoms of the disease? I tell thee, thou foolish Fleming, the text speaketh but of promises made unto Christians, and there is in the rubric a special exception of such as are made to Welshmen.' At this commentary the Fleming grinned so broadly as to show his whole case of broad strong white teeth. Father Aldrovand himself grinned in sympathy, and then proceeded to say, 'Come — come, I see how it is. Thou hast studied some small revenge on me for doubting of thy truth; and, in verity, I think thou hast taken

it wittily enough. But wherefore didst thou not let me into the secret from the beginning? I promise thee I had foul suspicions of thee.'

'What!' said the Fleming, 'is it possible I could ever think of involving your reverence in a little matter of deceit? Surely Heaven hath sent me more grace and manners. Hark, I hear Jorworth's horn at the gate.'

'He blows like a town swineherd,' said Aldrovand, in disdain.

'It is not your reverence's pleasure that I should restore the cattle unto him, then?' said Flammock.

'Yes, thus far. Prithee deliver him straightway over the walls such a tub of boiling water as shall scald the hair from his goat-skin cloak. And, hark thee, do thou in the first place try the temperature of the kettle with thy forefinger, and that shall be thy penance for the trick thou hast played me.'

The Fleming answered this with another broad grin of intelligence, and they proceeded to the outer gate, to which Jorworth had come alone. Placing himself at the wicket, which, however, he kept carefully barred, and speaking through a small opening, contrived for such purpose, Wilkin Flammock demanded of the Welshman his business.

'To receive rendition of the castle, agreeable to promise,' said Jorworth.

'Ay? and art thou come on such an errand alone?' said Wilkin.

'No, truly,' answered Jorworth; 'I have some twoscore of men concealed among yonder bushes.'

'Then thou hadst best lead them away quickly,' answered Wilkin, 'before our archers let fly a sheaf of arrows among them.'

'How, villain! Dost thou not mean to keep thy promise?' said the Welshman.

'I gave thee none,' said the Fleming: 'I promised but to think on what thou didst say. I have done so, and have communicated with my ghostly father, who will in no respect hear of my listening to thy proposal.'

'And wilt thou,' said Jorworth, 'keep the cattle, which I simply sent in to the castle on the faith of our agreement?'

'I will excommunicate and deliver him over to Satan,' said the monk, unable to wait the phlegmatic and lingering answer of the Fleming, 'if he give horn, hoof, or hair of them to such an uncircumcised Philistine as thou or thy master.'

'It is well, shorn priest,' answered Jorworth, in great anger.

'But mark me — reckon not on your frock for ransom. When Gwenwyn hath taken this castle, as it shall not longer shelter such a pair of faithless traitors, I will have you sewed up each into the carcass of one of these kine, for which your penitent has forsworn himself, and lay you where wolf and eagle shall be your only companions.'

'Thou wilt work thy will when it is matched with thy power,' said the sedate Netherlander.

'False Welshman, we defy thee to thy teeth!' answered, in the same breath, the more irascible monk. 'I trust to see the hounds gnaw thy joints ere that day come that ye talk of so proudly.'

By way of answer to both, Jorworth drew back his arm with his levelled javelin, and shaking the shaft till it acquired a vibratory motion, he hurled it with equal strength and dexterity right against the aperture in the wicket. It whizzed through the opening at which it was aimed, and flew — harmlessly, however — between the heads of the monk and the Fleming; the former of whom started back, while the latter only said, as he looked at the javelin, which stood quivering in the door of the guard-room, 'That was well aimed, and happily balked.'

Jorworth, the instant he had flung his dart, hastened to the ambush which he had prepared, and gave them at once the signal and the example of a rapid retreat down the hill. Father Aldrovand would willingly have followed them with a volley of arrows, but the Fleming observed that ammunition was too precious with them to be wasted on a few runaways. Perhaps the honest man remembered that they had come within the danger of such a salutation, in some measure, on his own assurance.

When the noise of the hasty retreat of Jorworth and his followers had died away, there ensued a dead silence, well corresponding with the coolness and calmness of that early hour in the morning.

'This will not last long,' said Wilkin to the monk, in a tone of foreboding seriousness, which found an echo in the good father's bosom.

'It will not, and it cannot,' answered Aldrovand; 'and we must expect a shrewd attack, which I should mind little, but that their numbers are great, ours few, the extent of the walls considerable, and the obstinacy of these Welsh fiends almost equal to their fury. But we will do the best. I will to the Lady Eveline. She must show herself upon the battlements.

She is fairer in feature than becometh a man of my order to speak of; and she has withal a breathing of her father's lofty spirit. The look and the word of such a lady will give a man double strength in the hour of need.'

'It may be,' said the Fleming; 'and I will go see that the good breakfast which I have appointed be presently served forth; it will give my Flemings more strength than the sight of the ten thousand virgins — may their help be with us! — were they all arranged on a fair field.'

CHAPTER VIII

'T was when ye raised, 'mid sap and siege,
The banner of your rightful liege
At your she captain's call,
Who, miracle of womankind,
Lent mettle to the meanest hind
That mann'd her castle wall.

WILLIAM STEWART ROSE.

THE morning light was scarce fully spread abroad when Eveline Berenger, in compliance with her confessor's advice, commenced her progress around the walls and battlements of the beleaguered castle, to confirm by her personal entreaties the minds of the valiant, and to rouse the more timid to hope and to exertion. She wore a rich collar and bracelets, as ornaments which indicated her rank and high descent; and her under tunic, in the manner of the times, was gathered around her slender waist by a girdle, embroidered with precious stones, and secured by a large buckle of gold. From one side of the girdle was suspended a pouch or purse, splendidly adorned with needlework, and on the left side it sustained a small dagger of exquisite workmanship. A dark-coloured mantle, chosen as emblematic of her clouded fortunes, was flung loosely around her; and its hood was brought forward so as to shadow, but not hide, her beautiful countenance. Her looks had lost the high and ecstatic expression which had been inspired by supposed revelation, but they retained a sorrowful and mild, yet determined, character; and, in addressing the soldiers, she used a mixture of entreaty and command — now throwing herself upon their protection, now demanding in her aid the just tribute of their allegiance.

The garrison was divided, as military skill dictated, in groups, on the points most liable to attack, or from which an assailing enemy might be best annoyed; and it was this unavoidable separation of their force into small detachments which showed to disadvantage the extent of walls, compared

with the number of the defenders; and though Wilkin Flammock had contrived several means of concealing this deficiency of force from the enemy, he could not disguise it from the defenders of the castle, who cast mournful glances on the length of battlements which were unoccupied save by sentinels, and then looked out to the fatal field of battle, loaded with the bodies of those who ought to have been their comrades in this hour of peril.

The presence of Eveline did much to rouse the garrison from this state of discouragement. She glided from post to post, from tower to tower of the old grey fortress, as a gleam of light passes over a clouded landscape, and, touching its various points in succession, calls them out to beauty and effect. Sorrow and fear sometimes make sufferers eloquent. She addressed the various nations who composed her little garrison, each in appropriate language. To the English, she spoke as children of the soil; to the Flemings, as men who had become denizens by the right of hospitality; to the Normans, as descendants of that victorious race whose sword had made them the nobles and sovereigns of every land where its edge had been tried. To them she used the language of chivalry, by whose rules the meanest of that nation regulated, or affected to regulate, his actions; the English she reminded of their good faith and honesty of heart; and to the Flemings she spoke of the destruction of their property, the fruits of their honest industry. To all she proposed vengeance for the death of their leader and his followers; to all she recommended confidence in God and Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse; and she ventured to assure all of the strong and victorious bands that were already in march to their relief.

'Will the gallant champions of the cross,' she said, 'think of leaving their native land, while the wail of women and of orphans is in their ears? It were to convert their pious purpose into mortal sin, and to derogate from the high fame they have so well won. Yes, fight but valiantly, and perhaps, before the very sun that is now slowly rising shall sink in the sea, you will see it shining on the ranks of Shrewsbury and Chester. When did the Welshman wait to hear the clangour of their trumpets or the rustling of their silken banners? Fight bravely — fight freely but a while. Our castle is strong — our munition ample — your hearts are good — your arms are powerful. God is nigh to us, and our friends are not far distant. Fight, then, in the name of all that is good and holy — fight for

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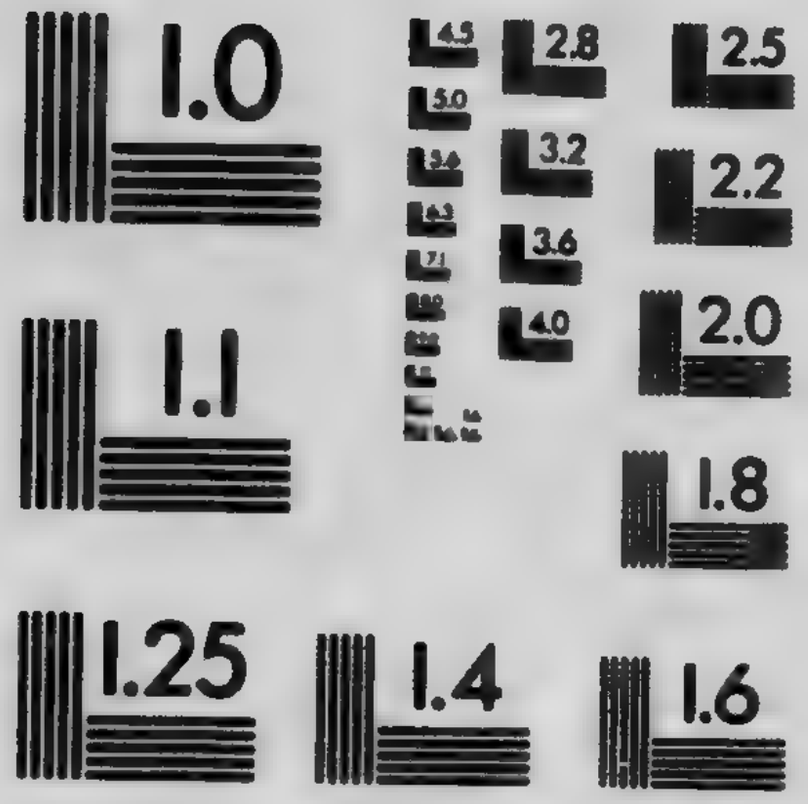

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yourselves, for your wives, for your children, and for your property; and oh! fight for an orphan maiden, who hath no other defenders but what a sense of her sorrows, and the remembrance of her father, may raise up among you!'

Such speeches as these made a powerful impression on the men to whom they were addressed, already hardened, by habits and sentiments, against a sense of danger. The chivalrous Normans swore, on the cross of their swords, they would die to a man ere they would surrender their posts; the blunter Anglo-Saxons cried, 'Shame on him who would render up such a lamb as Eveline to a Welsh wolf, while he could make her a bulwark with his body!' Even the cold Flemings caught a spark of the enthusiasm with which the others were animated, and muttered to each other praises of the young lady's beauty, and short but honest resolves to do the best they might in her defence.

Rose Flammock, who accompanied her lady with one or two attendants upon her circuit around the castle, seemed to have relapsed into her natural character of a shy and timid girl, out of the excited state into which she had been brought by the suspicions which in the evening before had attached to her father's character. She tripped closely but respectfully after Eveline, and listened to what she said from time to time, with the awe and admiration of a child listening to its tutor, while only her moistened eye expressed how far she felt or comprehended the extent of the danger, or the force of the exhortations. There was, however, a moment when the youthful maiden's eye became more bright, her step more confident, her looks more elevated. This was when they approached the spot where her father, having discharged the duties of commander of the garrison, was now exercising those of engineer, and displaying great skill, as well as wonderful personal strength, in directing and assisting the establishment of a large mangonel (a military engine used for casting stones) upon a station commanding an exposed postern-gate, which led from the western side of the castle down to the plain; and where a severe assault was naturally to be expected. The greater part of his armour lay beside him, but covered with his cassock to screen it from the morning dew; while in his leathern doublet, with arms bare to the shoulder, and a huge sledge-hammer in his hand, he set an example to the mechanics who worked under his direction.

In slow and solid natures there is usually a touch of

shamefacedness, and a sensitiveness to the breach of petty observances. Wilkin Flammock had been unmoved even to insensibility at the imputation of treason so lately cast upon him; but he coloured high, and was confused, while, hastily throwing on his cassock, he endeavoured to conceal the dishabille in which he had been surprised by the Lady Eveline. Not so his daughter. Proud of her father's zeal, her eye glanced from him to her mistress with a look of triumph, which seemed to say, 'And this faithful follower is he who was suspected of treachery!'

Eveline's own bosom made her the same reproach; and, anxious to atone for her momentary doubt of his fidelity, she offered for his acceptance a ring of value, 'In small amends,' she said, 'of a momentary misconstruction.'

'It needs not, lady,' said Flammock, with his usual bluntness, 'unless I have the freedom to bestow the gaud on Rose; for I think she was grieved enough at that which moved me little — as why should it?'

'Dispose of it as thou wilt,' said Eveline; 'the stone it bears is as true as thine own faith.'

Here Eveline paused, and looking on the broad expanded plain which extended between the site of the castle and the river, observed how silent and still the morning was rising over what had so lately been a scene of such extensive slaughter.

'It will not be so long,' answered Flammock: 'we shall have noise enough, and that nearer to our ears than yesterday.'

'Which way lie the enemy?' said Eveline; 'methinks I can spy neither tents nor pavilions.'

'They use none, lady,' answered Wilkin Flammock. 'Heaven has denied them the grace and knowledge to weave linen enough for such a purpose. Yonder they lie on both sides of the river, covered with naught but their white mantles. Would one think that a host of thieves and cut-throats could look so like the finest object in nature — a well-spread bleaching-field? Hark — hark! the wasps are beginning to buzz; they will soon be plying their stings.'

In fact, there was heard among the Welsh army a low and indistinct murmur, like that of

> Bees alarm'd, and mustering in their hives.

Terrified at the hollow menacing sound, which grew louder every moment, Rose, who had all the irritability of a sensitive temperament, clung to her father's arm, saying, in a terrified

whisper, 'It is like the sound of the sea the night before the great inundation.'

'And it betokens too rough weather for women to be abroad in,' said Flammock. 'Go to your chamber, Lady Eveline, if it be your will; and go you too, Roschen. God bless you both, ye do but keep us idle here.'

And, indeed, conscious that she had done all that was incumbent upon her, and fearful lest the chill which she felt creeping over her own heart should infect others, Eveline took her vassal's advice, and withdrew slowly to her own apartment, often casting back her eye to the place where the Welsh, now drawn out and under arms, were advancing their ridgy battalions, like the waves of an approaching tide.

The Prince of Powys had, with considerable military skill, adopted a plan of attack suitable to the fiery genius of his followers, and calculated to alarm on every point the feeble garrison.

The three sides of the castle which were defended by the river were watched each by a numerous body of the British, with instructions to confine themselves to the discharge of arrows, unless they should observe that some favourable opportunity of close attack should occur. But far the greater part of Gwenwyn's forces, consisting of three columns of great strength, advanced along the plain on the western side of the castle, and menaced, with a desperate assault, the walls, which, in that direction, were deprived of the defence of the river. The first of these formidable bodies consisted entirely of archers, who dispersed themselves in front of the beleaguered place, and took advantage of every bush and rising ground which could afford them shelter; and then began to bend their bows and shower their arrows on the battlements and loopholes, suffering, however, a great deal more damage than they were able to inflict, as the garrison returned their shot in comparative safety, and with more secure and deliberate aim.[1] Under cover, however, of their discharge of arrows, two very strong bodies of Welsh attempted to carry the outer defences of the castle by storm. They had axes to destroy the palisades, then called barriers; fagots to fill up the external ditches; torches to set fire to aught combustible which they might find; and, above all, ladders to scale the walls.

These detachments rushed with incredible fury towards the point of attack, despite a most obstinate defence, and the great

[1] See Welsh Bowmen. Note 7.

loss which they sustained by missiles of every kind, and continued the assault for nearly an hour, supplied by reinforcements which more than recruited their diminished numbers. When they were at last compelled to retreat, they seemed to adopt a new and yet more harassing species of attack. A large body assaulted one exposed point of the fortress with such fury as to draw thither as many of the besieged as could possibly be spared from other defended posts, and when there appeared a point less strongly manned than was adequate to defence, that, in its turn, was furiously assailed by a separate body of the enemy.

Thus the defenders of the Garde Doloureuse resembled the embarrassed traveller engaged in repelling a swarm of hornets, which, while he brushes them from one part, fix in swarms upon another, and drive him to despair by their numbers and the boldness and multiplicity of their attacks. The postern being, of course, a principal point of attack, Father Aldrovand, whose anxiety would not permit him to be absent from the walls, and who, indeed, where decency would permit, took an occasional share in the active defence of the place, hasted thither, as the point chiefly in danger.

Here he found the Fleming, like a second Ajax, grim with dust and blood, working with his own hands the great engine which he had lately helped to erect, and at the same time giving heedful eye to all the exigencies around.

'How thinkest thou of this day's work?' said the monk in a whisper.

'What skills it talking of it, father?' replied Flammock; 'thou art no soldier, and I have no time for words.'

'Nay, take thy breath,' said the monk, tucking up the sleeves of his frock; 'I will try to help thee the whilst, although, Our Lady pity me, I know nothing of these strange devices, not even the names. But our rule commands us to labour; there can be no harm, therefore, in turning this winch, or in placing this steel-headed piece of wood opposite to the cord (suiting his action to his words), nor see I aught uncanonical in adjusting the lever thus, or in touching the spring.'

The large bolt whizzed through the air as he spoke, and was so successfully aimed, that it struck down a Welsh chief of eminence, to whom Gwenwyn himself was in the act of giving some important charge.

'Well driven, trebuchet — well flown, quarrel!' cried the monk, unable to contain his delight, and giving, in his triumph,

the true technical names to the engine and the javelin which it discharged.

'And well aimed, monk,' added Wilkin Flammock: 'I think thou knowest more than is in thy breviary.'

'Care not thou for that,' said the father; 'and now that thou seest I can work an engine, and that the Welsh knaves seem something low in stomach, what think'st thou of our estate?'

'Well enough, for a bad one, if we may hope for speedy succour; but men's bodies are of flesh, not of iron, and we may be at last wearied out by numbers. Only one soldier to four yards of wall is a fearful odds; and the villains are aware of it, and keep us to sharp work.'

The renewal of the assault here broke off their conversation, nor did the active enemy permit them to enjoy much repose until sunset; for, alarming them with repeated menaces of attack upon different points, besides making two or three formidable and furious assaults, they left them scarce time to breathe, or to take a moment's refreshment. Yet the Welsh paid a severe price for their temerity; for while nothing could exceed the bravery with which their men repeatedly advanced to the attack, those which were made latest in the day had less of animated desperation than their first onset; and it is probable that the sense of having sustained great loss, and apprehension of its effects on the spirits of his people, made nightfall, and the interruption of the contest, as acceptable to Gwenwyn as to the exhausted garrison of the Garde Doloureuse.

But in the camp or leaguer of the Welsh there was glee and triumph, for the loss of the past day was forgotten in recollection of the signal victory which had preceded this siege; and the dispirited garrison could hear from their walls the laugh and the song, the sound of harping and gaiety, which triumphed by anticipation over their surrender.

The sun was for some time sunk, the twilight deepened, and night closed with a blue and cloudless sky, in which the thousand spangles that deck the firmament received double brilliancy from some slight touch of frost, although the paler planet, their mistress, was but in her first quarter. The necessities of the garrison were considerably aggravated by that of keeping a very strong and watchful guard, ill according with the weakness of their numbers, at a time which appeared favourable to any sudden nocturnal alarm; and, so urgent was this duty, that those who had been more slightly wounded on the

preceding day were obliged to take their share in it, notwithstanding their hurts. The monk and Fleming, who now perfectly understood each other, went in company around the walls at midnight, exhorting the warders to be watchful, and examining with their own eyes the state of the fortress. It was in the course of these rounds, and as they were ascending an elevated platform by a range of narrow and uneven steps, something galling to the monk's tread, that they perceived on the summit to which they were ascending, instead of the black corslet of the Flemish sentinel who had been placed there, two white forms, the appearance of which struck Wilkin Flammock with more dismay than he had shown during any of the doubtful events of the preceding day's fight.

'Father,' he said, 'betake yourself to your tools; *es spuckt* — there are hobgoblins here!'

The good father had not learned, as a priest, to defy the spiritual host, whom, as a soldier, he had dreaded more than any mortal enemy; but he began to recite, with chattering teeth, the exorcism of the church, '*Conjuro vos omnes, spiritus maligni, magni atque parvi,*' when he was interrupted by the voice of Eveline, who called out, 'Is it you, Father Aldrovand?'

Much lightened at heart by finding they had no ghost to deal with, Wilkin Flammock and the priest advanced hastily to the platform, where they found the lady with her faithful Rose, the former with a half-pike in her hand, like a sentinel on duty.

'How is this, daughter?' said the monk — 'how came you here, and thus armed? And where is the sentinel — the lazy Flemish hound that should have kept the post?'

'May he not be a lazy hound, yet not a Flemish one, father?' said Rose, who was ever awakened by anything which seemed a reflection upon her country; 'methinks I have heard of such curs of English breed.'

'Go to, Rose, you are too malapert for a young maiden,' said her father. 'Once more, where is Peterkin Vorst, who should have kept this post?'

'Let him not be blamed for my fault,' said Eveline, pointing to a place where the Flemish sentinel lay in the shade of the battlement fast asleep. 'He was overcome with toil, had fought hard through the day, and when I saw him asleep as I came hither, like a wandering spirit that cannot take slumber or repose, I would not disturb the rest which I envied. As he had fought for me, I might, I thought, watch an hour for

him; so I took his weapon with the purpose of remaining here till some one should come to relieve him.'

'I will relieve the schelm, with a vengeance!' said Wilkin Flammock, and saluted the slumbering and prostrate warder with two kicks which made his corslet clatter. The man started to his feet in no small alarm, which he would have communicated to the next sentinels and to the whole garrison, by crying out that the Welsh were upon the walls, had not the monk covered his broad mouth with his hand just as the roar was issuing forth. 'Peace, and get thee down to the under bailey,' said he; 'thou deservest death, by all the policies of war; but, look ye, varlet, and see who has saved your worthless neck, by watching while you were dreaming of swine's flesh and beer-pots.'

The Fleming, although as yet but half awake, was sufficiently conscious of his situation to sneak off without reply, after two or three awkward congees, as well to Eveline as to those by whom his repose had been so unceremoniously interrupted.

'He deserves to be tied neck and heel, the houndsfoot,' said Wilkin. 'But what would you have, lady? My countrymen cannot live without rest or sleep.' So saying, he gave a yawn so wide as if he had proposed to swallow one of the turrets at an angle of the platform on which he stood, as if it had only garnished a Christmas pasty.

'True, good Wilkin,' said Eveline; 'and do you therefore take some rest, and trust to my watchfulness, at least till the guards are relieved. I cannot sleep if I would, and I would not if I could.'

'Thanks, lady,' said Flammock; 'and in truth, as this is a centrical place, and the rounds must pass in an hour at farthest, I will e'en close my eyes for such a space, for the lids feel as heavy as flood-gates.'

'O, father — father!' exclaimed Rose [illegible] her sire's unceremonious neglect of decorum, 'think [illegible] you are, and in whose presence!'

'Ay — ay, good Flammock,' said the monk, 'remember the presence of a noble Norman maiden is no place for folding of cloaks and donning of nightcaps.'

'Let him alone, father,' said Eveline, who in another moment might have smiled at the readiness with which Wilkin Flammock folded himself in his huge cloak, extended his substantial form on the stone bench, and gave the most decided tokens

of profound repose, long ere the monk had done speaking. 'Forms and fashions of respect,' she continued, 'are for times of ease and nicety; when in danger, the soldier's bedchamber is wherever he can find leisure for an hour's sleep · his eating-hall, wherever he can obtain food. Sit thou down by Rose and me, good father, and tell us of some holy lesson which may pass away these hours of weariness and calamity.'

The father obeyed; but, however willing to afford consolation, his ingenuity and theological skill suggested nothing better than a recitation of the penitentiary psalms, in which task he continued until fatigue became too powerful for him also, when he committed the same breach of decorum for which he had upbraided Wilkin Flammock, and fell fast asleep in the midst of his devotions.

CHAPTER IX

'O night of woe,' she said and wept,
'O night foreboding sorrow!
O night of woe,' she said and wept,
'But more I dread the morrow!'

SIR GILBERT ELLIOT.

THE fatigue which had exhausted Flammock and the monk was unfelt by the two anxious maidens, who remained with their eyes bent, now upon the dim landscape, now on the stars by which it was lighted, as if they could have read there the events which the morrow was to bring forth. It was a placid and melancholy scene. Tree and field, and hill and plain, lay before them in doubtful light, while, at greater distance, their eye could with difficulty trace one or two places where the river, hidden in general by banks and trees, spread its more expanded bosom to the stars and the pale crescent. All was still, excepting the solemn rush of the waters, and now and then the shrill tinkle of a harp, which, heard from more than a mile's distance through the midnight silence, announced that some of the Welshmen still protracted their most beloved amusement. The wild notes, partially heard, seemed like the voice of some passing spirit; and, connected as they were with ideas of fierce and unrelenting hostility, thrilled on Eveline's ear, as if prophetic of war and woe, captivity and death. The only other sounds which disturbed the extreme stillness of the night were the occasional step of a sentinel upon his post, or the hooting of the owls, which seemed to wail the approaching downfall of the moonlight turrets in which they had established their ancient habitations.

The calmness of all around seemed to press like a weight on the bosom of the unhappy Eveline, and brought to her mind a deeper sense of present grief, and keener apprehension of future horrors, than had reigned there during the bustle, blood, and confusion of the preceding day. She rose up, she sat down,

she moved to and fro on the platform, she remained fixed like a statue to a single spot, as if she were trying by variety of posture to divert her internal sense of fear and sorrow.

At length, looking at the monk and the Fleming as they slept soundly under the shade of the battlement, she could no longer forbear breaking silence. 'Men are happy,' she said, 'my beloved Rose: their anxious thoughts are either diverted by toilsome exertion or drowned in the insensibility which follows it. They may encounter wounds and death, but it is we who feel in the spirit a more keen anguish than the body knows, and in the gnawing sense of present ill and fear of future misery suffer a living death, more cruel than that which ends our woes at once.'

'Do not be thus downcast, my noble lady,' said Rose; 'be rather what you were yesterday, caring for the wounded, for the aged, for every one but yourself, exposing even your dear life among the showers of the Welsh arrows, when doing so could give courage to others; while I — shame on me! could but tremble, sob, and weep, and needed all the little wit I have to prevent my shouting with the wild cries of the Welsh, or screaming and groaning with those of our friends who fell around me.'

'Alas! Rose,' answered her mistress, 'you may at pleasure indulge your fears to the verge of distraction itself; you have a father to fight and watch for you. Mine — my kind, noble, and honoured parent — lies dead on yonder field, and all which remains for me is to act as may best become his memory. But this moment is at least mine, to think upon and to mourn for him.'

So saying, and overpowered by the long-repressed burst of filial sorrow, she sunk down on the banquette which ran along the inside of the embattled parapet of the platform, and murmuring to herself, 'He is gone for ever!' abandoned herself to the extremity of grief. One hand grasped unconsciously the weapon which she held, and served, at the same time, to prop her forehead, while the tears, by which she was now for the first time relieved, flowed in torrents from her eyes, and her sobs seemed so convulsive, that Rose almost feared her heart was bursting. Her affection and sympathy dictated at once the kindest course which Eveline's condition permitted. Without attempting to control the torrent of grief in its full current, she gently sat her down beside the mourner, and possessing herself of the hand which had sunk

motionless by her side, she alternately pressed it to her lips, her bosom, and her brow, now covered it with kisses, now bedewed it with tears, and, amid these tokens of the most devoted and humble sympathy, waited a more composed moment to offer her little stock of consolation in such deep silence and stillness, that, as the pale light fell upon the two beautiful young women, it seemed rather to show a group of statuary, the work of some eminent sculptor, than beings whose eyes still wept and whose hearts still throbbed. At a little distance, the gleaming corslet of the Fleming, and the dark garments of Father Aldrovand, as they lay prostrate on the stone steps, might represent the bodies of those for whom the principal figures were mourning.

After a deep agony of many minutes, it seemed that the sorrows of Eveline were assuming a more composed character: her convulsive sobs were changed for long, low, profound sighs, and the course of her tears, though they still flowed, was milder and less violent. Her kind attendant, availing herself of these gentler symptoms, tried softly to win the spear from her lady's grasp. 'Let me be sentinel for a while,' she said, 'my sweet lady; I will at least scream louder than you if any danger should approach.' She ventured to kiss her cheek and throw her arms around Eveline's neck while she spoke; but a mute caress, which expressed her sense of the faithful girl's kind intentions to minister if possible to her repose, was the only answer returned. They remained for many minutes silent and in the same posture — Eveline like an upright and slender poplar, Rose, who encircled her lady in her arms, like the woodbine which twines around it.

At length Rose suddenly felt her young mistress shiver in her embrace, and that Eveline's hand grasped her arm rigidly as she whispered, 'Do you hear nothing?'

'No, nothing but the hooting of the owl,' answered Rose, timorously.

'I heard a distant sound,' said Eveline — 'I thought I heard it. Hark, it comes again! Look from the battlements, Rose, while I awaken the priest and thy father.'

'Dearest lady,' said Rose, 'I dare not. What can this sound be that is heard by one only? You are deceived by the rush of the river.'

'I would not alarm the castle unnecessarily,' said Eveline, pausing, 'or even break your father's needful slumbers, by a fancy of mine —— But hark - hark! I hear it again — distinct amidst the intermitting sound of the rushing water — a low,

tremulous sound, mingled with a tinkling like smiths or armourers at work upon their anvils.'

Rose had by this time sprung up on the banquette, and flinging back her rich tresses of fair hair, had applied her hand behind her ear to collect the distant sound. 'I hear it,' she cried, 'and it increases. Awake them, for Heaven's sake, and without a moment's delay!'

Eveline accordingly stirred the sleepers with the reverse end of the lance, and as they started to their feet in haste, she whispered, in a hasty but cautious voice, 'To arms — the Welsh are upon us!'

'What — where?' said Wilkin Flammock — 'where be they?'

'Listen, and you will hear them arming,' she replied.

'The noise is but in thine own fancy, lady,' said the Fleming, whose organs were of the same heavy character with his form and his disposition. 'I would I had never gone to sleep at all, since I was to be awakened so soon.

'Nay, but listen, good Flammock; the sound of armour comes from the north-east.'

'The Welsh lie not in that quarter, lady,' said Wilkin, 'and, besides, they wear no armour.'

'I hear it — I hear it!' said Father Aldrovand, who had been listening for some time. 'All praise to St. Benedict! Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse has been gracious to her servants as ever! It is the tramp of horse — it is the clash of armour: the chivalry of the Marches are coming to our relief. *Kyrie eleison!*'

'I hear something too,' said Flammock — 'something like the hollow sound of the great sea, when it burst into my neighbour Klinkerman's warehouse, and rolled his pots and pans against each other. But it were an evil mistake, father, to take foes for friends — we were best rouse the people.'

'Tush!' said the priest, 'talk to me of pots and kettles? Was I squire of the body to Count Stephen Mauleverer for twenty years, and do I not know the tramp of a war horse or the clash of a mail coat? But call the men to the walls at any rate, and have me the best drawn up in the base-court; we may help them by a sally.'

'That will not be rashly undertaken with my consent,' murmured the Fleming; 'but to the wall if you will, and in good time. But keep your Normans and English silent, sir priest, else their unruly and noisy joy will awaken the Welsh camp, and prepare them for their unwelcome visitors.'

The monk laid his finger on his lip in sign of intelligence, and they parted in opposite directions, each to rouse the defenders of the castle, who were soon heard drawing from all quarters to their posts upon the walls, with hearts in a very different mood from that in which they had descended from them. The utmost caution being used to prevent noise, the manning of the walls was accomplished in silence, and the garrison awaited in breathless expectation the success of the forces who were rapidly advancing to their relief.

The character of the sounds, which now loudly awakened the silence of this eventful night, could no longer be mistaken. They were distinguishable from the rushing of a mighty river, or from the muttering sound of distant thunder, by the sharp and angry notes which the clashing of the riders' arms mingled with the deep bass of the horses' rapid tread.[1] From the long continuance of the sounds, their loudness, and the extent of horizon from which they seemed to come, all in the castle were satisfied that the approaching relief consisted of several very strong bodies of horse. At once this mighty sound ceased, as if the earth on which they trode had either devoured the armed squadrons or had become incapable of resounding to their tramp. The defenders of the Garde Doloureuse concluded that their friends had made a sudden halt, to give their horses breath, examine the leaguer of the enemy, and settle the order of the attack upon them. The pause, however, was but momentary.

The British, so alert at surprising their enemies, were themselves, on many occasions, liable to surprise. Their men were undisciplined, and sometimes negligent of the patient duties of the sentinel; and, besides, their foragers and flying parties, who scoured the country during the preceding day, had brought back tidings which had lulled them into fatal security. Their camp had been therefore carelessly guarded, and, confident in the smallness of the garrison, they had altogether neglected the important military duty of establishing patrols and outposts at a proper distance from their main body. Thus the cavalry of the Lords Marchers, notwithstanding the noise which accompanied their advance, had approached very near the British camp without exciting the least alarm. But while they were arranging their forces into separate columns, in order to commence the assault, a loud and increasing clamour among the Welsh announced that they were at length aware of their

[1] See Battle of Armour. Note 8.

danger. The shrill and discordant cries by which they endeavoured to assemble their men, each under the banner of his chief, resounded from their leaguer. But these rallying shouts were soon converted into screams, and clamours of horror and dismay, when the thundering charge of the barbed horses and heavily-armed cavalry of the Anglo-Normans surprised their undefended camp.

Yet not even under circumstances so adverse did the descendants of the ancient Britons renounce their defence, or forfeit their old hereditary privilege to be called the bravest of mankind. Their cries of defiance and resistance were heard resounding above the groans of the wounded, the shouts of the triumphant assailants, and the universal tumult of the night-battle. It was not until the morning light began to peep forth that the slaughter or dispersion of Gwenwyn's forces was complete, and that the 'earthquake voice of victory' arose in uncontrolled and unmingled energy of exultation.

Then the besieged, if they could be still so termed, looking from their towers over the expanded country beneath, witnessed nothing but one widespread scene of desultory flight and unrelaxed pursuit. That the Welsh had been permitted to encamp in fancied security upon the hither side of the river now rendered their discomfiture more dreadfully fatal. The single pass by which they could cross to the other side was soon completely choked by fugitives, on whose rear raged the swords of the victorious Normans. Many threw themselves into the river, upon the precarious chance of gaining the farther side, and, except a few who were uncommonly strong, skilful, and active, perished among the rocks and in the currents; others, more fortunate, escaped by fords, with which they had accidentally been made acquainted; many dispersed, or, in small bands, fled in reckless despair towards the castle, as if the fortress, which had beat them off when victorious, could be a place of refuge to them in their present forlorn condition; while others roamed wildly over the plain, seeking only escape from immediate and instant danger, without knowing whither they ran.

The Normans, meanwhile, divided into small parties, followed and slaughtered them at pleasure; while, as a rallying point for the victors, the banner of Hugo de Lacy streamed from a small mount, on which Gwenwyn had lately pitched his own, and surrounded by a competent force, both of infantry and horsemen, which the experienced baron permitted on no account to wander far from it.

The rest, as we have already said, followed the chase with shouts of exultation and of vengeance, ringing around the battlements, which resounded with the cries, 'Ha, St. Edward! Ha, St. Denis! Strike — slay — no quarter to the Welsh wolves — think on Raymond Berenger!'

The soldiers on the walls joined in these vengeful and victorious clamours, and discharged several sheaves of arrows upon such fugitives as, in their extremity, approached too near the castle. They would fain have sallied to give more active assistance in the work of destruction; but the communication being now open with the Constable of Chester's forces, Wilkin Flammock considered himself and the garrison to be under the orders of that renowned chief, and refused to listen to the eager admonitions of Father Aldrovand, who would, notwithstanding his sacerdotal character, have willingly himself taken charge of the sally which he proposed.

At length, the scene of slaughter seemed at an end. The retreat was blown on many a bugle, and knights halted on the plain to collect their personal followers, muster them under their proper pennon, and then march them slowly back to the great standard of their leader, around which the main body were again to be assembled, like the clouds which gather around the evening sun — a fanciful simile, which might yet be drawn farther, in respect of the level rays of strong lurid light which shot from those dark battalions, as the beams were flung back from their polished armour.

The plain was in this manner soon cleared of the horsemen, and remained occupied only by the dead bodies of the slaughtered Welshmen. The bands who had followed the pursuit to a greater distance were also now seen returning, driving before them, or dragging after them, dejected and unhappy captives, to whom they had given quarter when their thirst of blood was satiated.

It was then that, desirous to attract the attention of his liberators, Wilkin Flammock commanded all the banners of the castle to be displayed, under a general shout of acclamation from those who had fought under them. It was answered by a universal cry of joy from De Lacy's army, which rung so wide as might even yet have startled such of the Welsh fugitives as, far distant from this disastrous field of flight, might have ventured to halt for a moment's repose.

Presently after this greeting had been exchanged, a single rider advanced from the Constable's army towards the castle, showing, even at a distance, an unusual dexterity of horseman-

ship and grace of deportment. He arrived at the drawbridge, which was instantly lowered to admit him, whilst Flammock and the monk, for the latter, as far as he could, associated himself with the former in all acts of authority, hastened to receive the envoy of their liberator. They found him just alighted from the raven-coloured horse, which was slightly flecked with blood as well as foam, and still panted with the exertions of the evening [morning]; though, answering to the caressing hand of his youthful rider, he arched his neck, shook his steel caparison, and snorted, to announce his unabated mettle and unwearied love of combat. The young man's eagle look bore the same token of unabated vigour, mingled with the signs of recent exertion. His helmet hanging at his saddle-bow showed a gallant countenance, coloured highly, but not inflamed, which looked out from a rich profusion of short chestnut curls; and although his armour was of a massive and simple form, he moved under it with such elasticity and ease, that it seemed a graceful attire, not a burden or encumbrance. A furred mantle had not sat on him with more easy grace than the heavy hauberk, which complied with every gesture of his noble form. Yet his countenance was so juvenile that only the down on the upper lip announced decisively the approach to manhood. The females, who thronged into the court to see the first envoy of their deliverers, could not forbear mixing praises of his beauty with blessings on his valour; and one comely middle-aged dame, in particular, distinguished by the tightness with which her scarlet hose sat on a well-shaped leg and ankle, and by the cleanness of her coif, pressed close up to the young squire, and, more forward than the rest, doubled the crimson hue of his cheek by crying aloud that Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse had sent them news of their redemption by an angel .on. the sanctuary — a speech which, although Father Aldrovand shook his head, was received by her companions with such general acclamation as greatly embarrassed the young man's modesty.

'Peace, all of ye!' said Wilkin Flammock. 'Know you no respects, you women, or have you never seen a young gentleman before, that you hang on him like flies on a honeycomb? Stand back, I say, and let us hear in peace what are the commands of the noble Lord of Lacy.'

'These,' said the young man, 'I can only deliver in the presence of the right noble demoiselle, Eveline Berenger, if I may be thought worthy of such honour.'

'That thou art, noble sir,' said the same forward dame, who had before expressed her admiration so energetically; 'I will uphold thee worthy of her presence, and whatever other grace a lady can do thee.'

'Now hold thy tongue, with a wanion!' said the monk; while in the same breath the Fleming exclaimed, 'Beware the cucking-stool, Dame Scant-o'-Grace!' while he conducted the noble youth across the court.

'Let my good horse be cared for,' said the cavalier, as he put the bridle into the hand of a menial; and in doing so got rid of some part of his female retinue, who began to pat and praise the steed as much as they had done the rider; and some, in the enthusiasm of their joy, hardly abstained from kissing the stirrups and horse-furniture.

But Dame Gillian was not so easily diverted from her own point as were some of her companions. She continued to repeat the word 'cucking-stool' till the Fleming was out of hearing, and then became more specific in her objurgation. 'And why cucking-stool, I pray, Sir Wilkin Butter-firkin? You are the man would stop an English mouth with a Flemish damask napkin, I trow! Marry guep, my cousin the weaver! And why the cucking-stool, I pray? because my young lady is comely, and the young squire is a man of mettle, reverence to his beard that is to come yet! Have we not eyes to see, and have we not a mouth and a tongue?'

'In troth, Dame Gillian, they do you wrong who doubt it,' said Eveline's nurse, who stood by; 'but, I prithee, keep it shut now, were it but for womanhood.'

'How now, mannerly Mrs. Margery?' replied the incorrigible Gillian; 'is your heart so high, because you dandled our young lady on your knee fifteen years since? Let me tell you, the cat will find its way to the cream, though it was brought up on an abbess's lap.'

'Home, housewife — home!' exclaimed her husband, the old huntsman, who was weary of this public exhibition of his domestic termagant — 'home, or I will give you a taste of my dog-leash. Here are both the confessor and Wilkin Flammock wondering at your impudence.'

'Indeed!' replied Gillian; 'and are not two fools enough for wonderment, that you must come with your grave pate to make up the number three?'

There was a general laugh at the huntsman's expense, under cover of which he prudently withdrew his spouse, with-

out attempting to continue the war of tongues, in which she had shown such a decided superiority.

This controversy, so light is the change in human spirits, especially among the lower class, awakened bursts of idle mirth among beings who had so lately been in the jaws of danger, if not of absolute despair.

CHAPTER X

They bore him barefaced on his bier,
Six proper youths and tall,
And many a tear bedew'd his grave
Within yon kirkyard wall.
The Friar of Orders Grey.

WHILE these matters took place in the castle-yard, the young squire, Damian Lacy, obtained the audience which he had requested of Eveline Berenger, who received him in the great hall of the castle, seated beneath the dais, or canopy, and waited upon by Rose and other female attendants, of whom the first alone was permitted to use a tabouret or small stool in her presence, so strict were the Norman maidens of quality in maintaining their claims to high rank and observance.

The youth was introduced by the confessor and Flammock, as the spiritual character of the one, and the trust reposed by her late father in the other, authorised them to be present upon the occasion. Eveline naturally blushed, as she advanced two steps to receive the handsome youthful envoy; and her bashfulness seemed infectious, for it was with some confusion that Damian went through the ceremony of saluting the hand which she extended towards him in token of welcome. Eveline was under the necessity of speaking first.

'We advance as far as our limits will permit us,' she said, 'to greet with our thanks the messenger who brings us tidings of safety. We speak — unless we err — to the noble Damian of Lacy?'

'To the humblest of your servants,' answered Damian, falling with some difficulty into the tone of courtesy which his errand and character required, 'who approaches you on behalf of his noble uncle, Hugo de Lacy, Constable of Chester.'

'Will not our noble deliverer in person honour with his presence the poor dwelling which he has saved?'

'My noble kinsman,' answered Damian, 'is now God's soldier,

and bound h[illegible] vow not to come beneath a roof until he embark for the [illegible]ly Land. But by my voice he congratulates you on the de[illegible]t of your savage enemies, and sends you these tokens that the comrade and friend of your noble father hath not left his lamentable death many hours unavenged.' So saying, he drew forth and laid before Eveline the gold bracelets, the coronet, and t[illegible]audorchawg, or chain of linked gold, which had distinguished the rank of the Welsh prince.

'Gwenwyn hath then fallen?' said Eveline, a natural shudder combating with the feelings of gratified vengeance, as she beheld that the trophies were specked with blood — 'the slayer of my father is no more!'

'My kinsman's lance transfixed the Briton as he endeavoured to rally his flying people; he died grimly on the weapon which had passed more than a fathom through his body, and exerted his last strength in a furious but ineffectual blow with his mace.'

'Heaven is just,' said Eveline; 'may his sins be forgiven to the man of blood, since he hath fallen by a death so bloody! One question I would ask you, noble sir. My father's remains ——' She paused, unable to proceed.

'An hour will place them at your disposal, most honoured lady,' replied the squire, in the tone of sympathy which the sorrows of so young and so fair an orphan call[illegible]rresistibly forth. 'Such preparations as time admitted were making, even when I left the host, to transport wh[illegible] was mortal of the noble Berenger from the field on wh[illegible]a we found [illegible], amid a monument of slain which his own swo[illegible] had [illegible] kinsman's vow will not allow him to pass your portal[illegible] with your permission, I will represent him, if such [illegible] your pleasure, at these honoured obsequies, having charge to that effect.'

'My brave and noble father,' said Eveline, making an effort to restrain her tears, 'will be best mourned by the noble and the brave.' She would have continued, but her voice failed her, and she was obliged to withdraw abruptly, in order to give vent to her sorrow, and prepare for the funeral rites with such ceremony as circumstances should permit. Damian bowed to the departing mourner as reverently as he would have done to a divinity, and, taking his horse, returned to his uncle's host, which had encamped hastily on the recent field of battle.

The sun was now high, and the whole plain presented the appearance of a bustle equally different from the solitude of the early morning and from the roar and fury of the subse-

quent engagement. The news of Hugo de Lacy's victory everywhere spread abroad with all the alacrity of triumph, and had induced many of the inhabitants of the country, who had fled before the fury of the Wolf of Plinlimmon, to return to their desolate habitations. Numbers also of the loose and profligate characters which abound in a country subject to the frequent changes of war, had flocked thither in quest of spoil, or to gratify a spirit of restless curiosity. The Jew and the Lombard, despising danger where there was a chance of gain, might be already seen bartering liquors and wares with the victorious men-at-arms, for the blood-stained ornaments of gold lately worn by the defeated British. Others acted as brokers betwixt the Welsh captives and their captors; and where they could trust the means and good faith of the former, sometimes became bound for, or even advanced in ready money, the sums necessary for their ransom; whilst a more numerous class became themselves . e purchasers of those prisoners who had no immediate means of settling with their conquerors.

That the spoil thus acquired might not long encumber the soldier, or blunt his ardour for farther enterprise, the usual means of dissipating military spoils were already at hand. Courtezans, mimes, jugglers, minstrels, and tale-tellers of every description had accompanied the night-march; and, secure in the military reputation o. the celebrated De Lacy, had rested fearlessly at some little distance until the battle was fought and won. These now approached, in many a joyous group, to congratulate the victors. Close to the parties which they formed for the dance, the song, or the tale, upon the yet bloody field, the countrymen, summoned in for the purpose, were opening large trenches for depositing the dead, leeches were seen tending the wounded, priests and monks confessing those in extremity, soldiers transporting from the field the bodies of the more honoured among the slain, peasants mourning over their trampled crops and plundered habitations, and widows and orphans searching for the bodies of husbands and parents amid the promiscuous carnage of two combats. Thus woe mingled her wildest notes with those of jubilee and bacchanal triumph, and the plain of the Garde Doloureuse formed a singular parallel to the varied maze of human life, where joy and grief are so strangely mixed, and where the confines of mirth and pleasure often border on those of sorrow and of death.

About noon these various noises were at once silenced, and the

attention alike of those who rejoiced or who grieved was arrested by the loud and mournful sound of six trumpets, which, uplifting and uniting their thrilling tones in a wild and melancholy death-note, apprised all that the obsequies of the valiant Raymond Berenger were about to commence. From a tent which had been hastily pitched for the immediate reception of the body, twelve black monks, the inhabitants of a neighbouring convent, began to file out in pairs, headed by their abbot, who bore a large cross, and thundered forth the sublime notes of the Catholic *Miserere me, Domine.* Then came a chosen body of men-at-arms, trailing their lances, with their points reversed and pointed to the earth; and after them the body of the valiant Berenger, wrapped in his own knightly banner, which, regained from the hands of the Welsh, now served its noble owner instead of a funeral pall. The most gallant knights of the Constable's household (for, like other great nobles of that period, he had formed it upon a scale which approached to that of royalty) walked as mourners and supporters of the corpse, which was borne upon lances; and the Constable of Chester himself, alone and fully armed, excepting the head, followed as chief mourner. A chosen body of squires, men-at-arms, and pages of noble descent brought up the rear of the procession; while their nakers and trumpets echoed back, from time to time, the melancholy song of the monks, by replying in a note as lugubrious as their own.

The course of pleasure was arrested, and even that of sorrow was for a moment turned from her own griefs, to witness the last honours bestowed on him who had been in life the father and guardian of his people.

The mournful procession traversed slowly the plain which had been within a few hours the scene of such varied events; and, pausing before the outer gate of the barricades of the castle, invited, by a prolonged and solemn flourish, the fortress to receive the remains of its late gallant defender. The melancholy summons was answered by the warder's horn, the drawbridge sunk, the portcullis rose, and Father Aldrovand appeared in the middle of the gateway, arrayed in his sacerdotal habit, whilst a little space behind him stood the orphaned damsel, in such weeds of mourning as time admitted, supported by her attendant Rose, and followed by the females of the household.

The Constable of Chester paused upon the threshold of the outer gate, and, pointing to the cross signed in white cloth

upon his left shoulder, with a lowly reverence resigned to his nephew, Damian, the task of attending the remains of Raymond Berenger to the chapel within the castle. The soldiers of Hugo de Lacy, most of whom were bound by the same vow with himself, also halted without the castle gate, and remained under arms, while the death-peal of the chapel bell announced from within the progress of the procession.

It winded on through those narrow entrances which were skilfully contrived to interrupt the progress of an enemy, even should he succeed in forcing the outer gate, and arrived at length in the great courtyard, where most of the inhabitants of the fortress, and those who, under recent circumstances, had taken refuge there, were drawn up, in order to look, for the last time, on their departed lord. Among these were mingled a few of the motley crowd from without, whom curiosity, or the expectation of a dole, had brought to the castle gate, and who, by one argument or another, had obtained from the warders permission to enter the interior.

The body was here set down before the door of the chapel, the ancient Gothic front of which formed one side of the courtyard, until certain prayers were recited by the priests, in which the crowd around were supposed to join with becoming reverence.

It was during this interval that a man, whose peaked beard, embroidered girdle, and high-crowned hat of grey felt gave him the air of a Lombard merchant, addressed Margery, the nurse of Eveline, in a whispering tone, and with a foreign accent. 'I am a travelling-merchant, good sister, and am come hither in quest of gain; can you tell me whether I can have any custom in this castle?'

'You are come at an evil time, sir stranger: you may yourself see that this is a place for mourning, and not for merchandise.'

'Yet mourning times have their own commerce,' said the stranger, approaching still closer to the side of Margery, and lowering his voice to a tone yet more confidential. 'I have sable scarfs of Persian silk; black bugles, in which a princess might mourn for a deceased monarch; cyprus, such as the East hath seldom sent forth; black cloth for mourning hangings – all that may express sorrow and reverence in fashion and attire; and I know how to be grateful to those who help me to custom. Come, bethink you, good dame, such things must be had; I will sell as good ware and as cheap as another; and

a kirtle to yourself, or, at your pleasure, a purse with five florins, shall be the meed of your kindness.'

'I prithee peace, friend,' said Margery, 'and choose a better time for vaunting your wares; you neglect both place and season, and if you be farther importunate, I must speak to those who will show you the outward side of the castle gate. I marvel the warders would admit pedlars upon a day such as this: they would drive a gainful bargain by the bedside of their mother, were she dying, I trow.' So saying, she turned scornfully from him.

While thus angrily rejected on the one side, the merchant felt his cloak receive an intelligent twitch upon the other, and, looking round upon the signal, he saw a dame, whose black kerchief was affectedly disposed, so as to give an appearance of solemnity to a set of light laughing features, which must have been captivating when young, since they retained so many good points when at least forty years had passed over them. She winked to the merchant, touching at the same time her under lip with her forefinger, to announce the propriety of silence and secrecy; then gliding from the crowd, retreated to a small recess formed by a projecting buttress of the chapel, as if to avoid the pressure likely to take place at the moment when the bier should be lifted. The merchant failed not to follow her example, and was soon by her side, when she did not give him the trouble of opening his affairs, but commenced the conversation herself.

'I have heard what you said to our dame Margery — Mannerly Margery, as I call her — heard as much, at least, as led me to guess the rest, for I have got an eye in my head, I promise you.'

'A pair of them, my pretty dame, and as bright as drops of dew in a May morning.'

'Oh, you say so, because I have been weeping,' said the scarlet-hosed Gillian, for it was even herself who spoke; 'and to be sure, I have good cause, for our lord was always my very good lord, and would sometimes chuck me under the chin, and call me buxom Gillian of Croydon; not that the good gentleman was ever uncivil, for he would thrust a silver twopennies into my hand at the same time. Oh! the friend that I have lost! And I have had anger on his account too: I have seen old Raoul as sour as vinegar, and fit for no place but the kennel for a whole day about it; but, as I said to him, it was not for the like of me to be affronting our master, and a great baron, about a chuck under the chin, or a kiss, or such-like.'

'No wonder you are so sorry for so kind a master, dame,' said the merchant.

'No wonder indeed,' replied the dame, with a sigh; 'an then what is to become of us? It is like my young mistress will go to her aunt; or she will marry one of these Lacys that they talk so much of; or, at any rate, she will leave the castle; and it's like old Raoul and I will be turned to grass with the lord's old chargers. The Lord knows, they may as well hang him up with the old hounds, for he is both footless and fangless, and fit for nothing on earth that I know of.'

'Your young mistress is that lady in the mourning mantle,' said the merchant, 'who so nearly sunk down upon the body just now?'

'In good troth is she, sir, and much cause she has to sink down. I am sure she will be to seek for such another father.'

'I see you are a most discerning woman, gossip Gillian,' answered the merchant; 'and yonder youth that supported her is her bridegroom?'

'Much need she has for some one to support her,' said Gillian; 'and so have I for that matter, for what can poor old rusty Raoul do?'

'But as to your young lady's marriage?' said the merchant.

'No one knows more, than that such a thing was in treaty between our late lord and the great Constable of Chester, that came to-day but just in time to prevent the Welsh from cutting all our throats, and doing the Lord knoweth what mischief beside. But there is a marriage talked of, that is certain; and most think it must be for this smooth-cheeked boy, Damian, as they call him; for though the Constable has gotten a beard, which his nephew hath not, it is something too grizzled for a bridegroom's chin. Besides, he goes to the Holy Wars — fittest place for all elderly warriors — I wish he would take Raoul with him. But what is all this to what you were saying about your mourning wares even now? It is a sad truth, that my poor lord is gone. But what then? Well-a-day, you know the good old saw —

> Cloth must we wear,
> Eat beef and drink beer,
> Though the dead go to bier.

And for your merchandising, I am as like to help you with my good word as Mannerly Margery, provided you bid fair for it;

since, if the lady loves me not so much, I can turn the steward round my finger.'

'Take this in part of our bargain, pretty Mrs. Gillian,' said the merchant; 'and when my wains come up, I will consider you amply, if I get good sale by your favourable report. But how shall I get into the castle again? for I would wish to consult you, being a sensible woman, before I come in with my luggage.'

'Why,' answered the complaisant dame, 'if our English be on guard, you have only to ask for Gillian, and they will open the wicket to any single man at once — for we English stick all together, were it but to spite the Normans; but if a Norman be on duty, you must ask for old Raoul, and say you come to speak of dogs and hawks for sale, and I warrant you come to speech of me that way. If the sentinel be a Fleming, you have but to say you are a merchant, and he will let you in for the love of trade.'

The merchant repeated his thankful acknowledgment, glided from her side, and mixed among the spectators, leaving her to congratulate herself on having gained a brace of florins by the indulgence of her natural talkative humour; for which, on other occasions, she had sometimes dearly paid.

The ceasing of the heavy toll of the castle bell now gave intimation that the noble Raymond Berenger had been laid in the vault with his fathers. That part of the funeral attendants who had come from the host of De Lacy now proceeded to the castle hall, where they partook, but with temperance, of some refreshments, which were offered as a death-meal; and presently after left the castle, headed by young Damian, in the same slow and melancholy form in which they had entered. The monks remained within the castle to sing repeated services for the soul of the deceased, and for those of his faithful men-at-arms who had fallen around him, and who had been so much mangled during, and after, the contest with the Welsh that it was scarce possible to know one individual from another; otherwise the body of Denzis Morolt would have obtained, as his faith well deserved, the honours of a separate funeral.[1]

[1] See Cruelties of the Welsh. Note 9.

CHAPTER XI

The funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage table.
Hamlet.

THE religious rites which followed the funeral of Raymond Berenger endured without interruption for the period of six days, during which alms were distributed to the poor, and relief administered, at the expense of the Lady Eveline, to all those who had suffered by the late inroad. Death-meals, as they were termed, were also spread in honour of the deceased; but the lady herself, and most of her attendants, observed a stern course of vigil, discipline, and fasts, which appeared to the Normans a more decorous manner of testifying their respect for the dead than the Saxon and Flemish custom of banqueting and drinking inordinately upon such occasions.

Meanwhile, the Constable de Lacy retained a large body of his men encamped under the walls of the Garde Doloureuse, for protection against some new irruption of the Welsh, while with the rest he took advantage of his victory, and struck terror into the British by many well-conducted forays, marked with ravages scarcely less hurtful than their own. Among the enemy, the evils of discord were added to those of defeat and invasion; for two distant relations of Gwenwyn contended for the throne he had lately occupied, and on this, as on many other occasions, the Britons suffered as much from internal dissension as from the sword of the Normans. A worse politician and a less celebrated soldier than the sagacious and successful De Lacy could not have failed, under such circumstances, to negotiate as he did an advantageous peace, which, while it deprived Powys of a part of its frontier, and the command of some important passes, in which it was the Constable's purpose to build castles, rendered the Garde Doloureuse more secure than formerly from any sudden attack on the part of their fiery and restless neighbours. De Lacy's care also went to re-

establishing those settlers who had fled from their possessions, and putting the whole lordship, which now descended upon an unprotected female, into a state of defence as perfect as its situation on a hostile frontier could possibly permit.

Whilst thus anxiously provident in the affairs of the orphan of the Garde Doloureuse, De Lacy, during the space we have mentioned, sought not to disturb her filial grief by any personal intercourse. His nephew, indeed, was despatched by times every morning to lay before her his uncle's devoirs, in the high-flown language of the day, and acquaint her with the steps which he had taken in her affairs. As a meed due to his relative's high services, Damian was always admitted to see Eveline on such occasions, and returned charged with her grateful thanks, and her implicit acquiescence in whatever the Constable proposed for her consideration.

But when the days of rigid mourning were elapsed, the young De Lacy stated, on the part of his kinsman, that his treaty with the Welsh being concluded, and all things in the district arranged as well as circumstances would permit, the Constable of Chester now proposed to return into his own territory, in order to resume his instant preparations for the Holy Land, which the duty of chastising her enemies had for some days interrupted.

'And will not the noble Constable, before he departs from this place,' said Eveline, with a burst of gratitude which the occasion well merited, 'receive the personal thanks of her that was ready to perish when he so valiantly came to her aid?'

'It was even on that point that I was commissioned to speak,' replied Damian; 'but my noble kinsman feels diffident to propose to you that which he most earnestly desires — the privilege of speaking to your own ears certain matters of high import, and with which he judges it fit to entrust no third party.'

'Surely,' said the maiden, blushing, 'there can be nought beyond the bounds of maidenhood in my seeing the noble Constable whenever such is his pleasure.'

'But his vow,' replied Damian, 'binds my kinsman not to come beneath a roof until he sets sail for Palestine; and in order to meet him, you must grace him so far as to visit his pavilion — a condescension which, as a knight and Norman noble, he can scarcely ask of a damsel of high degree.'

'And is that all?' said Eveline, who, educated in a remote situation, was a stranger to some of the nice points of etiquette

which the damsels of the time observed in keeping their state towards the other sex. 'Shall I not,' she said, 'go to render my thanks to my deliverer, since he cannot come hither to receive them? Tell the noble Hugo de Lacy that, next to my gratitude to Heaven, it is due to him and to his brave companions in arms. I will come to his tent as to a holy shrine; and, could such homage please him, I would come barefooted, were the road strewed with flints and with thorns.'

'My uncle will be equally honoured and delighted with your resolve,' said Damian; 'but it will be his study to save you all unnecessary trouble, and with that view a pavilion shall be instantly planted before your castle gate, which, if it please you to grace it with your presence, may be the place for the desired interview.'

Eveline readily acquiesced in what was proposed, as the expedient agreeable to the Constable and recommended by Damian; but, in the simplicity of her heart, she saw no good reason why, under the guardianship of the latter, she should not instantly, and without farther form, have traversed the little familiar plain on which, when a child, she used to chase butterflies and gather king's-cups, and where of later years she was wont to exercise her palfrey on this well-known plain, being the only space, and that of small extent, which separated her from the camp of the Constable.

The youthful emissary, with whose presence she had now become familiar, retired to acquaint his kinsman and lord with the success of his commission; and Eveline experienced the first sensation of anxiety upon her own account which had agitated her bosom since the defeat and death of Gwenwyn gave her permission to dedicate her thoughts exclusively to grief for the loss which she had sustained in the person of her noble father. But now, when that grief, though not satiated, was blunted by solitary indulgence; now that she was to appear before the person of whose fame she had heard so much, of whose powerful protection she had received such recent proofs, her mind insensibly turned upon the nature and consequences of that important interview. She had seen Hugo de Lacy, indeed, at the great tournament at Chester, where his valour and skill were the theme of every tongue, and she had received the homage which he rendered her beauty when he assigned to her the prize with all the gay flutterings of youthful vanity; but of his person and figure she had no distinct idea, excepting that he was a middle-sized man, dressed in peculiarly rich

armour, and that the countenance which looked out from under the shade of his raised visor seemed to her juvenile estimate very nearly as old as that of her father. This person, of whom she had such slight recollection, had been the chosen instrument employed by her tutelar protectress in rescuing her from captivity, and in avenging the loss of a father, and she was bound by her vow to consider him as the arbiter of her fate, if indeed he should deem it worth his while to become so. She wearied her memory with vain efforts to recollect so much of his features as might give her some means of guessing at his disposition, and her judgment toiled in conjecturing what line of conduct he was likely to pursue towards her.

The great baron himself seemed to attach to their meeting a degree of consequence, which was intimated by the formal preparations which he made for it. Eveline had imagined that he might have ridden to the gate of the castle in five minutes, and that, if a pavilion were actually necessary to the decorum of their interview, a tent could have been transferred from his leaguer to the castle gate, and pitched there in ten minutes more. But it was plain that the Constable considered much more form and ceremony as essential to their meeting; for, in about half an hour after Damian de Lacy had left the castle, not fewer than twenty soldiers and artificers, under the direction of a pursuivant, whose tabard was decorated with the armorial bearings of the house of Lacy, were employed in erecting before the gate of the Garde Doloureuse one of those splendid pavilions which were employed at tournaments and other occasions of public state. It was of purple silk, valanced with gold embroidery, having the cords of the same rich materials. The doorway was formed by six lances, the staves of which were plated with silver, and the blades composed of the same precious metal. These were pitched into the ground by couples, and crossed at the top, so as to form a sort of succession of arches, which were covered by drapery of sea-green silk, forming a pleasing contrast with the purple and gold.

The interior of the tent was declared by Dame Gillian and others, whose curiosity induced them to visit it, to be of a splendour agreeing with the outside. There were Oriental carpets, and there were tapestries of Ghent and Bruges mingled in gay profusion, while the top of the pavilion, covered with sky-blue silk, was arranged so as to resemble the firmament, and richly studded with a sun, moon, and stars, composed of solid silver. This gorgeous pavilion had been made for the use

of the celebrated William of Ypres, who acquired such great wealth as general of the mercenaries of King Stephen, and was by him created Earl of Albemarle; but the chance of war had assigned it to De Lacy, after one of the dreadful engagements so many of which occurred during the civil wars betwixt Stephen and the Empress Maude, or Matilda. The Constable had never before been known to use it; for, although wealthy and powerful, Hugo de Lacy was, on most occasions, plain and unostentatious; which, to those who knew him, made his present conduct seem the more remarkable. At the hour of noon he arrived, nobly mounted, at the gate of the castle, and drawing up a small body of servants, pages, and equerries, who attended him in their richest liveries, placed himself at their head, and directed his nephew to intimate to the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse that the humblest of her servants awaited the honour of her presence at the castle gate.

Among the spectators who witnessed his arrival, there were many who thought that some part of the state and splendour attached to his pavilion and his retinue had been better applied to set forth the person of the Constable himself, as his attire was simple even to meanness, and his person by no means of such distinguished bearing as might altogether dispense with the advantages of dress and ornament. The opinion became yet more prevalent when he descended from horseback, until which time his masterly management of the noble animal he bestrode gave a dignity to his person and figure which he lost upon dismounting from his steel saddle. In height, the celebrated Constable scarce attained the middle size, and his limbs, though strongly built and well knit, were deficient in grace and ease of movement. His legs were slightly curved outwards, which gave him advantage as a horseman, but showed unfavourably when he was upon foot. He halted, though very slightly, in consequence of one of his legs having been broken by the fall of a charger, and inartificially set by an inexperienced surgeon. This, also, was a blemish in his deportment; and though his broad shoulders, sinewy arms, and expanded chest betokened the strength which he often displayed, it was strength of a clumsy and ungraceful character. His language and gestures were those of one seldom used to converse with equals, more seldom still with superiors — short, abrupt, and decisive, almost to the verge of sternness. In the judgment of those who were habitually acquainted with the Constable, there was both dignity and kindness in his keen eye and expanded brow; but

such as saw him for the first time judged less favourably, and pretended to discover a harsh and passionate expression, although they allowed his countenance to have, on the whole, a bold and martial character. His age was in reality not more than five-and-forty, but the fatigues of war and of climate had added in appearance ten years to that period of time. By far the plainest dressed man of his train, he wore only a short Norman mantle over the close dress of shamoy leather, which, almost always covered by his armour, was in some places slightly soiled by its pressure. A brown hat, in which he wore a sprig of rosemary in memory of his vow, served for his head-gear; his good sword and dagger hung at a belt made of seal-skin.

Thus accoutred, and at the head of a glittering and gilded band of retainers, who watched his slightest glance, the Constable of Chester awaited the arrival of the Lady Eveline Berenger at the gate of her castle of Garde Doloureuse.

The trumpets from within announced her presence, the bridge fell, and, led by Damian de Lacy in his gayest habit, and followed by her train of females and menial or vassal attendants, she came forth in her loveliness from under the massive and antique portal of her paternal fortress. She was dressed without ornaments of any kind, and in deep mourning weeds, as best befitted her recent loss; forming, in this respect, a strong contrast with the rich attire of her conductor, whose costly dress gleamed with jewels and embroidery, while their age and personal beauty made them in every other respect th fair counterpart of each other — a circumstance which probably gave rise to the delighted murmur and buzz which passed through the bystanders on their appearance, and which only respect for the deep mourning of Eveline prevented from breaking out into shouts of applause.

The instant that the fair foot of Eveline had made a step beyond the palisades which formed the outward barrier of the castle, the Constable de Lacy came forward to meet her, and, bending his right knee to the earth, craved pardon for the discourtesy which his vow had imposed on him, while he expressed his sense of the honour with which she now graced him as one for which his life, devoted to her service, would be an inadequate acknowledgment.

The action and speech, though both in consistence with the romantic gallantry of the times, embarrassed Eveline, and the rather that this homage was so publicly rendered. She en-

treated the Constable to stand up, and not to add to the confusion of one who was already sufficiently at a loss how to acquit herself of the heavy debt of gratitude which she owed him. The Constable arose accordingly, after saluting her hand, which she extended to him, and prayed her, since she was so far condescending, to deign to enter the poor hut he had prepared for her shelter, and to grant him the honour of the audience he had solicited. Eveline, without further answer than a bow, yielded him her hand, and, desiring the rest of her train to remain where they were, commanded the attendance of Rose Flammock.

'Lady,' said the Constable, 'the matters of which I am compelled thus hastily to speak are of a nature the most private.'

'This maiden,' replied Eveline, 'is my bower-woman, and acquainted with my most inward thoughts; I beseech you to permit her presence at our conference.'

'It were better otherwise,' said Hugo de Lacy, with some embarrassment; 'but your pleasure shall be obeyed.'

He led the Lady Eveline into the tent, and entreated her to be seated on a large pile of cushions, covered with rich Venetian silk. Rose placed herself behind her mistress, half kneeling upon the same cushions, and watched the motions of the all-accomplished soldier and statesman, whom the voice of fame lauded so loudly, enjoying his embarrassment as a triumph of her sex, and scarcely of opinion that his shamoy doublet and square form accorded with the splendour of the scene, or the almost angelic beauty of Eveline, the other actor therein.

'Lady,' said the Constable, after some hesitation, 'I would willingly say what it is my lot to tell you in such terms as ladies love to listen to, and which surely your excellent beauty more especially deserves; but I have been too long trained in camps and councils to express my meaning otherwise than simply and plainly.'

'I shall the more easily understand you, my lord,' said Eveline, trembling, though she scarce knew why.

'My story, then, must be a blunt one. Something there passed between your honourable father and myself, touching a union of our houses.' He paused, as if he wished or expected Eveline to say something, but, as she was silent, he proceeded. 'I would to God that, as he was at the beginning of this treaty, it had pleased Heaven he should have conducted and concluded it with his usual wisdom; but what remedy? he has gone the path which we must all tread.'

Your lordship,' said Eveline, 'has nobly avenged the death of your noble friend.'

'I have but done my devoir, lady, as a good knight in defence of an endangered maiden, a Lord Marcher in protection of the frontier, and a friend in avenging his friend. But to the point. Our long and noble line draws near to a close. Of my remote kinsman, Randal Lacy, I will not speak; for in him I see nothing that is good or hopeful, nor have we been at one for many years. My nephew, Damian, gives hopeful promise to be a worthy branch of our ancient tree; but he is scarce twenty years old, and hath a long career of adventure and peril to encounter ere he can honourably propose to himself the duties of domestic privacy or matrimonial engagements. His mother also is English, some abatement perhaps in the escutcheon of his arms; yet, had ten years more passed over him with the honours of chivalry, I should have proposed Damian de Lacy for the happiness to which I at present myself aspire.'

'You — you, my lord! it is impossible!' said Eveline, endeavouring at the same time to suppress all that could be offensive in the surprise which she could not help exhibiting.

'I do not wonder,' replied the Constable, calmly, for, the ice now being broken, he resumed the natural steadiness of his manner and character — 'that you express surprise at this daring proposal. I have not perhaps the form that pleases a lady's eye, and I have forgotten — that is, if ever I knew them — the terms and phrases which please a lady's ear; but, noble Eveline, the lady of Hugo de Lacy will be one of the foremost among the matronage of England.'

'It will the better become the individual to whom so high a dignity is offered,' said Eveline, 'to consider how far she is capable of discharging its duties.'

'Of that I fear nothing,' said De Lacy. 'She who hath been so excellent a daughter cannot be less estimable in every other relation in life.'

'I do not find that confidence in myself, my lord,' replied the embarrassed maiden, 'with which you are so willing to load me. And I — forgive me — must crave time for other inquiries as well as those which respect myself.'

'Your father, noble lady, had this union warmly at heart. This scroll, signed with his own hand, will show it.' He bent his knee as he gave the paper. 'The wife of De Lacy will have, as the daughter of Raymond Berenger merits, the rank of a princess; his widow, the dowery of a queen.'

'Mock me not with your knee, my lord, while you plead to me the paternal commands, which, joined to other circumstances ——' she paused, and sighed deeply — 'leave me, perhaps, but little room for free-will!'

Emboldened by this answer, De Lacy, who had hitherto remained on his knee, rose gently, and assuming a seat beside the Lady Eveline, continued to press his suit — not, indeed, in the language of passion, but of a plain-spoken man, eagerly urging a proposal on which his happiness depended. The vision of the miraculous image was, it may be supposed, uppermost in the mind of Eveline, who, tied down by the solemn vow she had made on that occasion, felt herself constrained to return evasive answers, where she might perhaps have given a direct negative, had her own wishes alone been to decide her reply.

'You cannot,' she said, 'expect from me, my lord, in this my so recent orphan state, that I should come to a speedy determination upon an affair of such deep importance. Give me leisure of your nobleness for consideration with myself — for consultation with my friends.'

'Alas! fair Eveline,' said the baron, 'do not be offended at my urgency. I cannot long delay setting forward on a distant and perilous expedition; and the short time left me for soliciting your favour must be an apology for my importunity.'

'And is it in these circumstances, noble De Lacy, that you would encumber yourself with family ties?' asked the maiden, timidly.

'I am God's soldier,' said the Constable, 'and He in whose cause I fight in Palestine will defend my wife in England.'

'Hear then my present answer, my lord,' said Eveline Berenger, rising from her seat. 'To-morrow I proceed to the Benedictine nunnery at Gloucester, where resides my honoured father's sister, who is abbess of that reverend house. To her guidance I will commit myself in this matter.'

'A fair and maidenly resolution,' answered De Lacy, who seemed, on his part, rather glad that the conference was abridged, 'and, as I trust, not altogether unfavourable to the suit of your humble suppliant, since the good lady abbess hath been long my honoured friend.' He then turned to Rose, who was about to attend her lady. 'Pretty maiden,' he said, offering a chain of gold, 'let this carcanet encircle thy neck and buy thy good-will.'

'My good-will cannot be purchased, my lord,' said Rose, putting back the gift which he proffered.

'Your fair word then,' said the Constable, again pressing it upon her.

'Fair words are easily bought,' said Rose, still rejecting the chain, 'but they are seldom worth the purchase-money.'

'Do you scorn my proffer, damsel?' said De Lacy; 'it has graced the neck of a Norman count.'

'Give it to a Norman countess, then, my lord,' said the damsel. 'I am plain Rose Flammock, the weaver's daughter. I keep my good word to go with my good-will, and a latten chain will become me as well as beaten gold.'

'Peace, Rose,' said her lady; 'you are over malapert to talk thus to the Lord Constable. And you, my lord,' she continued, 'permit me now to depart, since you are possessed of my answer to your present proposal. I regret it had not been of some less delicate nature, that, by granting it at once, and without delay, I might have shown my sense of your services.'

The lady was handed forth by the Constable of Chester with the same ceremony which had been observed at their entrance, and she returned to her own castle, sad and anxious in mind for the event of this important conference. She gathered closely around her the great mourning-veil, that the alteration of her countenance might not be observed; and, without pausing to speak even to Father Aldrovand, she instantly withdrew to the privacy of her own bower.

CHAPTER XII

Now all ye ladies of fair Scotland,
And ladies of England, that happy would prove,
Marry never for houses, nor marry for land,
Nor marry for nothing but only love.

Family Quarrels.

WHEN the Lady Eveline had retired into her own private chamber, Rose Flammock followed her unbidden, and proffered her assistance in removing the large veil which she had worn while she was abroad; but the lady refused her permission, saying, 'You are forward with service, maiden, when it is not required of you.'

'You are displeased with me, lady!' said Rose.

'And if I am, I have cause,' replied Eveline. 'You know my difficulties, you know what my duty demands; yet, instead of aiding me to make the sacrifice, you render it more difficult.'

'Would I had influence to guide your path!' said Rose; 'you should find it a smooth one — ay, an honest and straight one to boot.'

'How mean you, maiden?' said Eveline.

'I would have you,' answered Rose, 'recall the encouragement — the consent, I may almost call it — you have yielded to this proud baron. He is too great to be loved himself, too haughty to love you as you deserve. If you wed him, you wed gilded misery, and, it may be, dishonour as well as discontent.'

'Remember, damsel,' answered Eveline Berenger, 'his services towards us.'

'His services!' answered Rose. 'He ventured his life for us, indeed, but so did every soldier in his host. And am I bound to wed any ruffling blade among them, because he fought when the trumpet sounded? I wonder what is the meaning of their devoir, as they call it, when it shames them not to claim the highest reward woman can bestow, merely for discharging

the duty of a gentleman by a distressed creature. A gentleman, said I? The coarsest boor in Flanders would hardly expect thanks for doing the duty of a man by women in such a case.'

'But my father's wishes?' said the young lady.

'They had reference, without doubt, to the inclination of your father's daughter,' answered the attendant. 'I will not do my late noble lord — may God assoilzie him! — the injustice to suppose he would have urged aught in this matter which squared not with your free choice.'

'Then my vow — my fatal vow, as I had wellnigh called it,' said Eveline. 'May Heaven forgive me my ingratitude to my patroness!'

'Even this shakes me not,' said Rose. 'I will never believe our Lady of Mercy would exact such a penalty for her protection as to desire me to wed the man I could not love. She smiled, you say, upon your prayer. Go, lay at her feet these difficulties which oppress you, and see if she will not smile again. Or seek a dispensation from your vow — seek it at the expense of the half of your estate — seek it at the expense of your whole property. Go a pilgrimage barefooted to Rome — do anything but give your hand where you cannot give your heart.'

'You speak warmly, Rose,' said Eveline, still sighing as she spoke.

'Alas! my sweet lady, I have cause. Have I not seen a household where love was not — where, although there was worth and good-will, and enough of the means of life, all was embittered by regrets, which were not only vain, but criminal?'

'Yet, methinks, Rose, a sense of what is due to ourselves and to others may, if listened to, guide and comfort us under such feelings even as thou hast described.'

'It will save us from sin, lady, but not from sorrow,' answered Rose; 'and wherefore should we, with our eyes open, rush into circumstances where duty must war with inclination? Why row against wind and tide, when you may as easily take advantage of the breeze?'

'Because the voyage of my life lies where winds and currents oppose me,' answered Eveline. 'It is my fate, Rose.'

'Not unless you make it such by choice,' answered Rose. 'O, could you but have seen the pale cheek, sunken eye, and dejected bearing of my poor mother! I have said too much.'

'It was then your mother,' said her young lady, 'of whose unhappy wedlock you have spoken?'

'It was — it was,' said Rose, bursting into tears. 'I have exposed my own shame to save you from sorrow. Unhappy she was, though most guiltless — so unhappy, that the breach of the dyke, and the inundation in which she perished, were, but for my sake, to her welcome as night to the weary labourer. She had a heart like yours, formed to love and be loved; and it would be doing honour to yonder proud baron to say he had such worth as my father's. Yet was she most unhappy. O! my sweet lady, be warned, and break off this ill-omened match!'

Eveline returned the pressure with which the affectionate girl, as she clung to her hand, enforced her well-meant advice, and then muttered, with a profound sigh, 'Rose, it is too late.'

'Never — never,' said Rose, looking eagerly round the room. 'Where are those writing-materials? Let me bring Father Aldrovand, and instruct him of your pleasure; or stay, the good father hath himself an eye on the splendours of the world which he thinks he has abandoned — he will be no safe secretary. I will go myself to the Lord Constable: *me* his rank cannot dazzle, or his wealth bribe, or his power overawe. I will tell him he doth no knightly part towards you, to press his contract with your father in such an hour of helpless sorrow; no pious part, in delaying the execution of his vows for the purpose of marrying or giving in marriage; no honest part, to press himself on a maiden whose heart has not decided in his favour; no wise part, to marry one whom he must presently abandon either to solitude or to the dangers of a profligate court.'

'You have not courage for such an embassy, Rose,' said her mistress, sadly smiling through her tears at her youthful attendant's zeal.

'Not courage for it! and wherefore not? Try me,' answered the Flemish maiden, in return. 'I am neither Saracen nor Welshman: his lance and sword scare me not. I follow not his banner: his voice of command concerns me not. I could, with your leave, boldly tell him he is a selfish man, veiling with fair and honourable pretext his pursuit of objects which concern his own pride and gratification, and founding high claims on having rendered the services which common humanity demanded. And all for what? Forsooth, the great De Lacy must have an heir to his noble house, and his fair nephew is

not good enough to be his representative, because his mother was of Anglo-Saxon strain, and the real heir must be pure unmixed Norman; and for this Lady Eveline Berenger, in the first bloom of youth, must be wedded to a man who might be her father, and who, after leaving her unprotected for years, will return in such guise as might beseem her grandfather!'

'Since he is thus scrupulous concerning purity of lineage,' said Eveline, 'perhaps he may call to mind — what so good a herald as he is cannot fail to know — that I am of Saxon strain by my father's mother.'

'Oh,' replied Rose, 'he will forgive that blot in the heiress of the Garde Doloureuse.'

'Fie, Rose,' answered her mistress, 'thou dost him wrong in taxing him with avarice.'

'Perhaps so,' answered Rose; 'but he is undeniably ambitious; and avarice, I have heard, is ambition's bastard brother, though ambition be sometimes ashamed of the relationship.'

'You speak too boldly, damsel,' said Eveline; 'and, while I acknowledge your affection, it becomes me to check your mode of expression.'

'Nay, take that tone, and I have done,' said Rose. 'To Eveline, whom I love, and who loves me, I can speak freely; but to the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, the proud Norman damsel — which when you choose to be you can be — I can courtesy as low as my station demands, and speak as little truth as she cares to hear.'

'Thou art a wild but a kind girl,' said Eveline; 'no one who did not know thee would think that soft and childish exterior covered such a soul of fire. Thy mother must indeed have been the being of feeling and passion you paint her; for thy father — nay, nay, never arm in his defence until he be attacked — I only meant to say, that his solid sense and sound judgment are his most distinguished qualities.'

'And I would you would avail yourself of them, lady,' said Rose.

'In fitting things I will; but he were rather an unmeet counsellor in that which we now treat of,' said Eveline.

'You mistake him,' answered Rose Flammock, 'and underrate his value. Sound judgment is like to the graduated measuring-wand, which, though usually applied only to coarser cloths, will give with equal truth the dimensions of Indian silk or of cloth of gold.'

'Well — well, this affair presses not instantly at least,' said the young lady. 'Leave me now, Rose, and send Gillian the tirewoman hither; I have directions to give about the packing and removal of my wardrobe.'

'That Gillian the tirewoman hath been a mighty favourite of late,' said Rose; 'time was when it was otherwise.'

'I like her manners as little as thou dost,' said Eveline; 'but she is old Raoul's wife; she was a sort of half-favourite with my dear father, who, like other men, was perhaps taken by that very freedom which we think unseemly in persons of our sex; and then there is no other woman in the castle that hath such skill in empacketing clothes without the risk of their being injured.'

'That last reason alone,' said Rose, smiling, 'is, I admit, an irresistible pretension to favour, and Dame Gillian shall presently attend you. But take my advice, lady: keep her to her bales and her mails, and let her not prate to you on what concerns her not.'

So saying, Rose left the apartment, and her young lady looked after her in silence, then murmured to herself — 'Rose loves me truly; but she would willingly be more of the mistress than the maiden; and then she is somewhat jealous of every other person that approaches me. It is strange that I have not seen Damian de Lacy since my interview with the Constable. He anticipates, I suppose, the chance of his finding in me a severe aunt!'

But the domestics, who crowded for orders with reference to her removal early on the morrow, began now to divert the current of their lady's thoughts from the consideration of her own particular situation, which, as the prospect presented nothing pleasant, with the elastic spirit of youth, she willingly postponed till further leisure.

CHAPTER XIII

Too much rest is rust,
  There 's ever cheer in changing;
We tyne by too much trust,
  So we 'll be up and ranging.

Old Song.

EARLY on the subsequent morning, a gallant company, saddened indeed by the deep mourning which their principals wore, left the well-defended Castle of the Garde Doloureuse, which had been so lately the scene of such remarkable events.

The sun was just beginning to exhale the heavy dews which had fallen during the night, and to disperse the thin grey mist which eddied around towers and battlements, when Wilkin Flammock, with six cross-bowmen on horseback, and as many spearmen on foot, sallied forth from under the Gothic gateway, and crossed the sounding drawbridge. After this advanced guard came four household servants well mounted, and after them as many inferior female attendants, all in mourning. Then rode forth the young Lady Eveline herself, occupying the centre of the little procession, and her long black robes formed a striking contrast to the colour of her milk-white palfrey. Beside her, on a Spanish jennet, the gift of her affectionate father — who had procured it at a high rate, and who would have given half his substance to gratify his daughter — sat the girlish form of Rose Flammock, who had so much of juvenile shyness in her manner, so much of feeling and of judgment in her thoughts and actions. Dame Margery followed, mixed in the party escorted by Father Aldrovand, whose company she chiefly frequented; for Margery affected a little the character of the devotee, and her influence in the family, as having been Eveline's nurse, was so great as to render her no improper companion for the chaplain, when her lady did not require her attendance on her own person. Then came old Raoul the huntsman, his wife, and two or three other officers of Raymond Berenger's household; the

steward, with his golden chain, velvet cassock, and white wand, bringing up the rear, which was closed by a small band of archers and four men-at-arms. The guards, and indeed the greater part of the attendants, were only designed to give the necessary degree of honour to the young lady's movements, by accompanying her a short space from the castle, where they were met by the Constable of Chester, who, with a retinue of thirty lances, proposed himself to escort Eveline as far as Gloucester, the place of her destination. Under his protection no danger was to be apprehended, even if the severe defeat so lately sustained by the Welsh had not of itself been likely to prevent any attempt, on the part of those hostile mountaineers, to disturb the safety of the marches for some time to come.

In pursuance of this arrangement, which permitted the armed part of Eveline's retinue to return for the protection of the castle, and the restoration of order in the district around, the Constable awaited her at the fatal bridge, at the head of the gallant band of selected horsemen whom he had ordered to attend upon him. The parties halted, as if to salute each other; but the Constable, observing that Eveline drew her veil more closely around her, and recollecting the loss she had so lately sustained on that luckless spot, had the judgment to confine his greeting to a mute reverence, so low that the lofty plume which he wore (for he was now in complete armour) mingled with the flowing mane of his gallant horse. Wilkin Flammock next halted, to ask the lady if she had any farther commands.

'None, good Wilkin,' said Eveline; 'but to be, as ever, true and watchful.'

'The properties of a good mastiff,' said Flammock. 'S[illegible] rude sagacity, and a stout hand instead of a sharp [illegible] teeth, are all that I can claim to be added to them. I v[illegible] my best. Fare thee well, Roschen! Thou art going am[illegible] strangers; forget not the qualities which made thee loved at home. The saints bless thee — farewell!'

The steward next approached to take his leave, but in doing so, had nearly met with a fatal accident. It had been the pleasure of Raoul, who was in his own disposition cross-grained, and in person rheumatic, to accommodate himself with an old Arab horse, which had been kept for the sake of the breed, as lean, and almost as lame, as himself, and with a temper as vicious as that of a fiend. Betwixt the rider and the horse [illegible] constant misunderstanding, testified on Raoul's part by oaths,

rough checks with the curb, and severe digging with the spurs, which Mahound (so paganishly was the horse named) answered by plunging, bounding, and endeavouring by all expedients to unseat his rider, as well as striking and lashing out furiously at whatever else approached him. It was thought by many of the household that Raoul preferred this vicious cross-tempered animal upon all occasions when he travelled in company with his wife, in order to take advantage by the chance that, amongst the various kicks, plunges, gambades, lashings out, and other eccentricities of Mahound, his heels might come in contact with Dame Gillian's ribs. And now, when as the important steward spurred up his palfrey to kiss his young lady's hand, and to take his leave, it seemed to the bystanders as if Raoul so managed his bridle and spur, that Mahound yerked out his hoofs at the same moment, one of which coming in contact with the steward's thigh, would have splintered it like a rotten reed, had the parties been a couple of inches nearer to each other. As it was, the steward sustained considerable damage; and they that observed the grin upon Raoul's vinegar countenance entertained little doubt that Mahound's heels then and there avenged certain nods, winks, and wreathed smiles which had passed betwixt the gold-chained functionary and the coquettish tirewoman since the party left the castle.

This incident abridged the painful solemnity of parting betwixt the Lady Eveline and her dependants, and lessened at the same time the formality of her meeting with the Constable, and, as it were, resigning herself to his protection.

Hugo de Lacy, having commanded six of his men-at-arms to proceed as an advanced guard, remained himself to see the steward properly deposited on a litter, and then, with the rest of his followers, marched in military fashion about one hundred yards in the rear of Lady Eveline and her retinue, judiciously forbearing to present himself to her society while she was engaged in the orisons which the place where they met naturally suggested, and waiting patiently until the elasticity of youthful temper should require some diversion of the gloomy thoughts which the scene inspired.

Guided by this policy, the Constable did not approach the ladies until the advance of the morning rendered it politeness to remind them that a pleasant spot for breaking their fast occurred in the neighbourhood, where he had ventured to make some preparations for rest and refreshment. Immediately after the Lady Eveline had intimated her acceptance of this courtesy,

they came in sight of the spot he alluded to, marked by an ancient oak, which, spreading its broad branches far and wide, reminded the traveller of that of Mamre, under which celestial beings accepted the hospitality of the patriarch. Across two of these huge projecting arms was flung a piece of rose-coloured sarsnet, as a canopy to keep off the morning beams, which were already rising high. Cushions of silk, interchanged with others covered with the furs of animals of the chase, were arranged round a repast which a Norman cook had done his utmost to distinguish, by the superior delicacy of his art, from the gross meals of the Saxons, and the penurious simplicity of the Welsh tables. A fountain, which bubbled from under a large mossy stone at some distance, refreshed the air with its sound, and the taste with its liquid crystal; while, at the same time, it formed a cistern for cooling two or three flasks of Gascon wine and hippocras, which were at that time the necessary accompaniments of the morning meal.

When Eveline, with Rose, the confessor, and at some farther distance her faithful nurse, was seated at this silvan banquet, the leaves rustling to a gentle breeze, the water bubbling in the background, the birds twittering around, while the half-heard sounds of conversation and laughter at a distance announced that their guard was in the vicinity, she could not avoid making the Constable some natural compliment on his happy selection of a place of repose.

'You do me more than justice,' replied the baron: 'the spot was selected by my nephew, who hath a fancy like a minstrel. Myself am but slow in imagining such devices.'

Rose looked full at her mistress, as if she endeavoured to look into her very inmost soul; but Eveline answered with the utmost simplicity — 'And wherefore hath not the noble Damian waited to join us at the entertainment which he hath directed?'

'He prefers riding onward,' said the baron, 'with some light horsemen; for, notwithstanding there are now no Welsh knaves stirring, yet the marches are never free from robbers and outlaws; and though there is nothing to fear for a band like ours, yet you should not be alarmed even by the approach of danger.'

'I have indeed seen but too much of it lately,' said Eveline; and relapsed into the melancholy mood from which the novelty of the scene had for a moment awakened her.

Meanwhile, the Constable, removing, with the assistance of his squire, his mailed hood and its steel crest, as well as his

gauntlets, remained in his flexible coat of mail, composed entirely of rings of steel curiously interwoven, his hands bare, and his brows covered with a velvet bonnet of a peculiar fashion, appropriated to the use of knights, and called a *mortier*, which permitted him both to converse and to eat more easily than when he wore the full defensive armour. His discourse was plain, sensible, and manly; and, turning upon the state of the country, and the precautions to be observed for governing and defending so disorderly a frontier, it became gradually interesting to Eveline, one of whose warmest wishes was to be the protectress of her father's vassals. De Lacy, on his part, seemed much pleased; for, young as Eveline was, her questions showed intelligence, and her mode of answering both apprehension and docility. In short, familiarity was so far established betwixt them that, in the next stage of their journey, the Constable seemed to think his appropriate place was at the Lady Eveline's bridle-rein; and although she certainly did not countenance his attendance, yet neither did she seem willing to discourage it. Himself no ardent lover, although captivated both with the beauty and the amiable qualities of the fair orphan, De Lacy was satisfied with being endured as a companion, and made no efforts to improve the opportunity which this familiarity afforded him, by recurring to any of the topics of the preceding day.

A halt was made at noon in a small village, where the same purveyor had made preparations for their accommodation, and particularly for that of the Lady Eveline; but, something to her surprise, he himself remained invisible. The conversation of the Constable of Chester was, doubtless, in the highest degree instructive; but at Eveline's years a maiden might be excused for wishing some addition to the society in the person of a younger and less serious attendant; and when she recollected the regularity with which Damian Lacy had hitherto made his respects to her, she rather wondered at his continued absence. But her reflection went no deeper than the passing thought of one who was not quite so much delighted with her present company as not to believe it capable of an agreeable addition. She was lending a patient ear to the account which the Constable gave her of the descent and pedigree of a gallant knight of the distinguished family of Herbert, at whose castle he purposed to repose during the night, when one of the retinue announced a messenger from the Lady of Baldringham.

'My honoured father's aunt,' said Eveline, arising to testify

that respect for age and relationship which the manners of the time required.

'I knew not,' said the Constable, 'that my gallant friend had such a relative.'

'She was my grandmother's sister,' answered Eveline, 'a noble Saxon lady; but she disliked the match formed with a Norman house, and never saw her sister after the period of her marriage.'

She broke off, as the messenger, who had the appearance of the steward of a person of consequence, entered their presence, and, bending his knee reverently, delivered a letter, which, being examined by Father Aldrovand, was found to contain the following invitation, expressed, not in French, then the general language of communication amongst the gentry, but in the old Saxon language, modified as it now was by some intermixture of French:—

'If the grand-daughter of Aelfreid of Baldringham hath so much of the old Saxon strain as to desire to see an ancient relation, who still dwells in the house of her forefathers and lives after their manner, she is thus invited to repose for the night in the dwelling of Ermengarde of Baldringham.'

'Your pleasure will be, doubtless, to decline the present hospitality?' said the Constable de Lacy. 'The noble Herbert expects us, and has made great preparation.'

'Your presence, my lord,' said Eveline, 'will more than console him for my absence. It is fitting and proper that I should meet my aunt's advances to reconciliation, since she has condescended to make them.'

De Lacy's brow was slightly clouded, for seldom had he met with anything approaching to contradiction of his pleasure. 'I pray you to reflect, Lady Eveline,' he said, 'that your aunt's house is probably defenceless, or at least very imperfectly guarded. Would it not be your pleasure that I should continue my dutiful attendance?'

'Of that, my lord, mine aunt can, in her own house, be the sole judge; and methinks, as she has not deemed it necessary to request the honour of your lordship's company, it were unbecoming in me to permit you to take the trouble of attendance: you have already had but too much on my account.'

'But for the sake of your own safety, madam,' said De Lacy, unwilling to leave his charge.

'My safety, my lord, cannot be endangered in the house of so near a relative; whatever precautions she may take on her own behalf will doubtless be amply sufficient for mine.'

'I hope it will be found so,' said De Lacy; 'and I will at least add to them the security of a patrol around the castle during your abode in it.' He stopped, and then proceeded with some hesitation to express his hope that Eveline, now about to visit a kinswoman whose prejudices against the Norman race were generally known, would be on her guard against what she might hear upon that subject.

Eveline answered with dignity, that the daughter of Raymond Berenger was unlikely to listen to any opinions which would affect the dignity of that good knight's nation and descent; and with this assurance the Constable, finding it impossible to obtain any which had more special reference to himself and his suit, was compelled to remain satisfied. He recollected also that the castle of Herbert was within two miles of the habitation of the Lady of Baldringham, and that his separation from Eveline was but for one night; yet a sense of the difference betwixt their years, and perhaps of his own deficiency in those lighter qualifications by which the female heart is supposed to be most frequently won, rendered even this temporary absence matter of anxious thought and apprehension; so that, during their afternoon journey, he rode in silence by Eveline's side, rather meditating what might chance to-morrow than endeavouring to avail himself of present opportunity. In this unsocial manner they travelled on until the point was reached where they were to separate for the evening.

This was an elevated spot, from which they could see, on the right hand, the castle of Amelot [William] Herbert, rising high upon an eminence, with all its Gothic pinnacles and turrets; and on the left, low-embowered amongst oaken woods, the rude and lonely dwelling in which the Lady of Baldringham still maintained the customs of the Anglo-Saxons, and looked with contempt and hatred on all innovations that had been introduced since the battle of Hastings.

Here the Constable De Lacy, having charged a part of his men to attend the Lady Eveline to the house of her relation, and to keep watch around it with the utmost vigilance, but at such a distance as might not give offence or inconvenience to the family, kissed her hand, and took a reluctant leave. Eveline proceeded onwards by a path so little trodden as to show the solitary condition of the mansion to which it led. Large kine,

of an uncommon and valuable breed, were feeding in the rich pastures around; and now and then fallow deer, which appeared to have lost the shyness of their nature, tripped across the glades of the woodland, or stood and lay in small groups under some great oak. The transient pleasure which such a scene of rural quiet was calculated to afford changed to more serious feelings, when a sudde turn brought her at once in front of the mansion-house, of which she had seen nothing since she first beheld it from the point where she parted with the Constable, and which she had more than one reason for regarding with some apprehension.

The house, for it could not be termed a castle, was only two stories high, low and massively built, with doors and windows forming the heavy round arch which is usually called Saxon; the walls were mantled with various creeping plants, which had crept along them undisturbed; grass grew up to the very threshold, at which hung a buffalo's horn, suspended by a brass chain. A massive door of black oak closed a gate, which much resembled the ancient entrance of a ruined sepulchre, and not a soul appeared to acknowledge or greet their arrival.

'Were I you, my Lady Eveline,' said the officious Dame Gillian, 'I would turn bridle yet; for this old dungeon seems little likely to afford food or shelter to Christian folks.'

Eveline imposed silence on her indiscreet attendant, though herself exchanging a look with Rose which confessed something like timidity, as she commanded Raoul to blow the horn at the gate. 'I have heard,' she said, 'that my aunt loves the ancient customs so well, that she is loth to admit into her halls anything younger than the time of Edward the Confessor.'

Raoul, in the meantime, cursing the rude instrument which baffled his skill in sounding a regular call, and gave voice only to a tremendous and discordant roar, which seemed to shake the old walls, thick as they were, repeated his summons three times before they obtained admittance. On the third sounding, the gate opened, and a numerous retinue of servants of both sexes appeared in the dark and narrow hall, at the upper end of which a great fire of wood was sending its furnace-blast up an antique chimney, whose front, as extensive as that of a modern kitchen, was carved over with ornaments of massive stone, and garnished on the top with a long range of niches, from each of which frowned the image of some Saxon saint, whose barbarous name was scarce to be found in the Romish calendar.

The same officer who had brought the invitation from his

lady to Eveline now stepped forward, as she supposed, to assist her from her palfrey; but it was in reality to lead it by the bridle-rein into the paved hall itself, and up to a raised platform, or dais, at the upper end of which she was at length permitted to dismount. Two matrons of advanced years, and four young women of gentle birth, educated by the bounty of Ermengarde, attended with reverence the arrival of her kinswoman. Eveline would have inquired of them for her grand-aunt, but the matrons with much respect laid their fingers on their mouths, as if to enjoin her silence — a gesture which, united to the singularity of her reception in other respects, still further excited her curiosity to see her venerable relative.

It was soon gratified; for, through a pair of folding-doors, which opened not far from the platform on which she stood, she was ushered into a large low apartment hung with arras; at the upper end of which, under a species of canopy, was seated the ancient Lady of Baldringham. Fourscore years had not quenched the brightness of her eyes, or bent an inch of her stately height; her grey hair was still so profuse as to form a tier, combined as it was with a chaplet of ivy leaves; her long dark-coloured gown fell in ample folds, and the broidered girdle, which gathered it around her, was fastened by a buckle of gold, studded with precious stones, which were worth an earl's ransom; her features, which had once been beautiful, or rather majestic, bore still, though faded and wrinkled, an air of melancholy and stern grandeur, that assorted well with her garb and deportment. She had a staff of ebony in her hand; at her feet rested a large aged wolf-dog, who pricked his ears and bristled up his neck as the step of a stranger, a sound so seldom heard in those halls, approached the chair in which his aged mistress sat motionless.

'Peace, Thryme,' said the venerable dame; 'and thou, daughter of the house of Baldringham, approach, and fear not their ancient servant.'

The hound sunk down to his couchant posture when she spoke, and, excepting the red glare of his eyes, might have seemed a hieroglyphical emblem, lying at the feet of some ancient priestess of Woden or Freya; so strongly did the appearance of Ermengarde, with her rod and her chaplet, correspond with the ideas of the days of paganism. Yet he who had thus deemed of her would have done therein much injustice to a venerable Christian matron, who had given many a hide of land to holy church, in honour of God and St. Dunstan.

Ermengarde's reception of Eveline was of the same antiquated and formal cast with her mansion and her exterior. She did not at first arise from her seat when the noble maiden approached her, nor did she even admit her to the salute which she advanced to offer; but, laying her hand on Eveline's arm, stopped her as she advanced, and perused her countenance with an earnest and unsparing eye of minute observation.

'Berwine,' she said to the most favoured of the two attendants, 'our niece hath the skin and eyes of the Saxon hue; but the hue of her eyebrows and hair is from the foreigner and alien. Thou art, nevertheless, welcome to my house, maiden,' she added, addressing Eveline, 'especially if thou canst bear to hear that thou art not absolutely a perfect creature, as doubtless these flatterers around thee have taught thee to believe.'

So saying, she at length arose, and saluted her niece with a kiss on the forehead. She released her not, however, from her grasp, but proceeded to give the attention to her garments which she had hitherto bestowed upon her features.

'St. Dunstan keep us from vanity!' she said; 'and so this is the new guise, and modest maidens wear such tunics as these, showing the shape of their persons as plain as if — St. Mary defend us! — they were altogether without garments! And see, Berwine, these gauds on the neck, and that neck itself uncovered as low as the shoulder — these be the guises which strangers have brought into merry England! and this pouch, like a player's placket, hath but little to do with housewifery, I wot; and that dagger, too, like a gleeman's wife, that rides a-mumming in masculine apparel; dost thou ever go to the wars, maiden, that thou wearest steel at thy girdle?'

Eveline, equally surprised and disobliged by the depreciating catalogue of her apparel, replied to the last question with some spirit. 'The mode may have altered, madam; but I only wear such garments as are now worn by those of my age and condition. For the poniard, may it please you, it is not many days since I regarded it as the last resource betwixt me and dishonour.'

'The maiden speaks well and boldly, Berwine,' said Dame Ermengarde; 'and, in truth, pass we but over some of these vain fripperies, is attired in a comely fashion. Thy father, I hear, fell knight-like in the field of battle.'

'He did so,' answered Eveline, her eyes filling with tears at the recollection of her recent loss.

'I never saw him,' continued Dame Ermengarde; 'he carried the old Norman scorn towards the Saxon stock, whom they wed but for what they can make by them, as the bramble clings to the elm; nay, never seek to vindicate him,' she continued, observing that Eveline was about to speak, 'I have known the Norman spirit for many a year ere thou wert born.'

At this moment the steward appeared in the chamber, and, after a long genuflection, asked his lady's pleasure concerning the guard of Norman soldiers who remained without the mansion.

'Norman soldiers so near the house of Baldringham!' said the old lady, fiercely. 'Who brings them hither, and for what purpose?'

'They came, as I think,' said the sewer, 'to wait on and guard this gracious young lady.'

'What, my daughter,' said Ermengarde, in a tone of melancholy reproach, 'darest thou not trust thyself unguarded for one night in the castle of thy forefathers?'

'God forbid else!' said Eveline. 'But these men are not mine, nor under my authority. They are part of the train of the Constable De Lacy, who left them to watch around the castle, thinking there might be danger from robbers.'

'Robbers,' said Ermengarde, 'have never harmed the house of Baldringham since a Norman robber stole from it its best treasure in the person of thy grandmother. And so, poor bird, thou art already captive — unhappy flutterer! But it is thy lot, and wherefore should I wonder or repine? When was there fair maiden with a wealthy dower, but she was ere maturity destined to be the slave of some of those petty kings, who allow us to call nothing ours that their passions can covet? Well, I cannot aid thee: I am but a poor and neglected woman, feeble both from sex and age. And to which of these De Lacys art thou the destined household drudge?'

A question so asked, and by one whose prejudices were of such a determined character, was not likely to draw from Eveline any confession of the real circumstances in which she was placed, since it was but too plain her Saxon relation could have afforded her neither sound counsel nor useful assistance. She replied therefore briefly, that as the Lacys, and the Normans in general, were unwelcome to her kinswoman, she would entreat of the commander of the patrol to withdraw it from the neighbourhood of Baldringham.

'Not so, my niece,' said the old lady; 'as we cannot escape

the Norman neighbourhood, or get beyond the sound of their curfew, it signifies not whether they be near our walls or more far off, so that they enter them not. And, Berwine, bid Hundwolf drench the Normans with liquor and gorge them with food — food of the best and liquor of the strongest. Let them not say the old Saxon hag is churlish of her hospitality. Broach a piece of wine, for I warrant their gentle stomachs brook no ale.'

Berwine, her huge bunch of keys jangling at her girdle, withdrew to give the necessary directions, and presently returned.

Meanwhile Ermengarde proceeded to question her niece more closely. 'Is it that thou wilt not, or canst not, tell me to which of the De Lacys thou art to be bondswoman? To the overweening Constable, who, sheathed in impenetrable armour, and mounted on a swift and strong horse as invulnerable as himself, takes pride that he rides down and stabs at his ease, and with perfect safety, the naked Welshmen? Or is it to his nephew, the beardless Damian? Or must thy possessions go to mend a breach in the fortunes of that other cousin, Randal Lacy, the decayed reveller who, they say, can no longer ruffle it among the debauched crusaders for want of means?'

'My honoured aunt,' replied Eveline, naturally displeased with this discourse, 'to none of the Lacys, and I trust to none other, Saxon or Norman, will your kinswoman become a household drudge. There was, before the death of my honoured father, some treaty betwixt him and the Constable, on which account I cannot at present decline his attendance; but what may be the issue of it, fate must determine.'

'But I can show thee, niece, how the balance of fate inclines,' said Ermengarde, in a low and mysterious voice. 'Those united with us by blood have, in some sort, the privilege of looking forward beyond the points of present time, and seeing in their very bud the thorns or flowers which are one day to encircle their head.'

'For my own sake, noble kinswoman,' answered Eveline, 'I would decline such foreknowledge, even were it possible to acquire it without transgressing the rules of the church. Could I have foreseen what has befallen me within these last unhappy days, I had lost the enjoyment of every happy moment before that time.'

'Nevertheless, daughter,' said the Lady of Baldringham, 'thou, like others of thy race, must within this house conform to the rule of passing one night within the chamber of the

Red-Finger. Berwine, see that it be prepared for my niece's reception.'

'I — I — have heard speak of that chamber, gracious aunt,' said Eveline, timidly, 'and if it may consist with your good pleasure, I would not now choose to pass the night there. My health has suffered by my late perils and fatigues, and with your goodwill I will delay to another time the usage, which I have heard is peculiar to the daughters of the house of Baldringham.'

'And which, notwithstanding, you would willingly avoid,' said the old Saxon lady, bending her brows angrily. 'Has not such disobedience cost your house enough already?'

'Indeed, honoured and gracious lady,' said Berwine, unable to forbear interference, though well knowing the obstinacy of her patroness, 'that chamber is in disrepair, and cannot easily on a sudden be made fit for the Lady Eveline; and the noble damsel looks so pale, and hath lately suffered so much, that, might I have the permission to advise, this were better delayed.'

'Thou art a fool, Berwine,' said the old lady, sternly; thinkest thou I will bring anger and misfortune on my house, by suffering this girl to leave it without rendering the usual homage to the Red-Finger? Go to, let the room be made ready: small preparation may serve, if she cherish not the Norman nicety about bed and lodging. Do not reply, but do as I command thee. And you, Eveline, are you so far degenerated from the brave spirit of your ancestry, that you dare not pass a few hours in an ancient apartment?'

'You are my hostess, gracious madam,' said Eveline, 'and must assign my apartment where you judge proper; my courage is such as innocence and some pride of blood and birth have given me. It has been, of late, severely tried; but, since such is your pleasure, and the custom of your house, my heart is yet strong enough to encounter what you propose to subject me to.'

She paused here in displeasure; for she resented, in some measure, her aunt's conduct, as unkind and inhospitable. And yet, when she reflected upon the foundation of the legend of the chamber to which she was consigned, she could not but regard the Lady of Baldringham as having considerable reason for her conduct, according to the traditions of the family, and the belief of the times, in which Eveline herself was devout.

CHAPTER XIV

Sometimes, methinks, I hear the groans of ghosts,
Then hollow sounds and lamentable screams,
Then, like a dying echo from afar,
My mother's voice, that cries, 'Wed not, Almeyda;
Forewarned, Almeyda, marriage is thy crime.'

Don Sebastian.

THE evening at Baldringham would have seemed of portentous and unendurable length, had it not been that apprehended danger makes time pass quickly betwixt us and the dreaded hour, and that, if Eveline felt little interested or amused by the conversation of her aunt and Berwine, which turned upon the long deduction of their ancestors from the warlike Horsa, and the feats of Saxon champions, and the miracles of Saxon monks, she was still better pleased to listen to these legends than to anticipate her retreat to the destined and dreaded apartment where she was to pass the night. There lacked not, however, such amusement as the house of Baldringham could afford, to pass away the evening. Blessed by a grave old Saxon monk, the chaplain of the house, a sumptuous entertainment, which might have sufficed twenty hungry men, was served up before Ermengarde and her niece, whose sole assistants, besides the reverend man, were Berwine and Rose Flammock. Eveline was the less inclined to do justice to this excess of hospitality, that the dishes were all of the gross and substantial nature which the Saxons admired, but which contrasted disadvantageously with the refined and delicate cookery of the Normans, as did the moderate cup of light and high-flavoured Gascon wine, tempered with more than half its quantity of the purest water, with the mighty ale, the high-spiced pigment and hippocras, and the other potent liquors, which, one after another, were in vain proffered for her acceptance by the steward Hundwolf, in honour of the hospitality of Baldringham.

Neither were the stated amusements of the evening more congenial to Eveline's taste than the profusion of her aunt's

solid refection. When the boards and tresses on which the viands had been served were withdrawn from the apartment, the menials, under direction of the steward, proceeded to light several long waxen torches, one of which was graduated for the purpose of marking the passing time, and dividing it into portions. These were announced by means of brazen balls, suspended by threads from the torch, the spaces betwixt them being calculated to occupy a certain time in burning; so that, when the flame reached the thread, and the balls fell, each in succession, into a brazen basin placed for its reception, the office of a modern clock was in some degree discharged. By this light the party was arranged for the evening.

The ancient Ermengarde's lofty and ample chair was removed, according to ancient custom, from the middle of the apartment to the warmest side of a large grate, filled with charcoal, and her guest was placed on her right, as the seat of honour. Berwine then arranged in due order the females of the household, and, having seen that each was engaged with her own proper task, sat herself down to ply the spindle and distaff. The men, in a more remote circle, betook themselves to the repairing of their implements of husbandry, or new furbishing weapons of the chase, under the direction of the steward, Hundwolf. For the amusement of the family thus assembled, an old gleeman sung to a harp, which had but four strings, a long and apparently interminable legend upon some religious subject, which was rendered almost unintelligible to Eveline by the extreme and complicated affectation of the poet, who, in order to indulge in the alliteration which was accounted one great ornament of Saxon poetry, had sacrificed sense to sound, and used words in the most forced and remote sense, provided they could be compelled into his service. There was also all the obscurity arising from elision, and from the most extravagant and hyperbolical epithets.

Eveline, though well acquainted with the Saxon language, soon left off listening to the singer, to reflect for a moment on the gay *fabliaux* and imaginative *lais* of the Norman minstrels, and then to anticipate, with anxious apprehension, what nature of visitation she might be exposed to in the mysterious chamber in which she was doomed to pass the night.

The hour of parting at length approached. At half an hour before midnight, a period ascertained by the consumption of the huge waxen torch, the ball which was secured to it fell clanging into the brazen basin placed beneath, and announced

to all the hour of rest. The old gleeman paused in his song instantaneously, and in the middle of a stanza, and the household were all on foot at the signal, some retiring to their own apartments, others lighting torches or bearing lamps to conduct the visitors to their places of repose. Among these last was a bevy of bower-women, to whom the duty was assigned of conveying the Lady Eveline to her chamber for the night. Her aunt took a solemn leave of her, crossed her forehead, kissed it, and whispered in her ear, 'Be courageous, and be fortunate.'

'May not my bower-maiden, Rose Flammock, or my tire-woman, Dame Gillian, Raoul's wife, remain in the apartment with me for this night?' said Eveline.

'Flammock — Raoul!' repeated Ermengarde, angrily; 'is thy household thus made up? The Flemings are the cold palsy to Britain, the Normans the burning fever!'

'And the poor Welsh will add,' said Rose, whose resentment began to surpass her awe for the ancient Saxon dame, 'that the Anglo-Saxons were the original disease, and resemble a wasting pestilence.'

'Thou art too bold, sweetheart,' said the Lady Ermengarde, looking at the Flemish maiden from under her dark brows; 'and yet there is wit in thy words. Saxon, Dane, and Norman have rolled like successive billows over the land, each having strength to subdue what they lacked wisdom to keep. When shall it be otherwise?'

'When Saxon, and Briton, and Norman, and Fleming,' answered Rose, boldly, 'shall learn to call themselves by one name, and think themselves alike children of the land they are born in.'

'Ha!' exclaimed the Lady of Baldringham, in the tone of one half surprised, half pleased. Then turning to her relation, she said, 'There are words and wit in this maiden; see that she use, but do not abuse, them.'

'She is as kind and faithful as she is prompt and ready-witted,' said Eveline. 'I pray you, dearest aunt, let me use her company for this night.'

'It may not be: it were dangerous to both. Alone you must learn your destiny, as have all the females of our race, excepting your grandmother; and what have been the consequences of her neglecting the rules of our house? Lo! her descendant stands before me an orphan, in the very bloom of youth.'

'I will go then,' said Eveline, with a sigh of resignation; 'and it shall never be said I incurred future woe to shun present terror.'

'Your attendants,' said the Lady Ermengarde, 'may occupy the ante-room, and be almost within your call. Berwine will show you the apartment; I cannot, for *we*, thou knowest, who have once entered it, return not thither again. Farewell, my child, and may Heaven bless thee!'

With more of human emotion and sympathy than she had yet shown, the lady again saluted Eveline, and signed to her to follow Berwine, who, attended by two damsels bearing torches, waited to conduct her to the dreaded apartment.

Their torches glared along the rudely-built walls and dark arched roofs of one or two long winding passages; these by their light enabled them to descend the steps of a winding stair, whose inequality and ruggedness showed its antiquity; and finally led into a tolerably large chamber on the lower story of the edifice, to which some old hangings, a lively fire on the hearth, the moonbeams stealing through a latticed window, and the boughs of a myrtle plant which grew around the casement, gave no uncomfortable appearance.

'This,' said Berwine, 'is the resting-place of your attendants,' and she pointed to the couches which had been prepared for Rose and Dame Gillian; 'we,' she added, 'proceed farther.'

She then took a torch from the attendant maidens, both of whom seemed to shrink back with fear, which was readily caught by Dame Gillian, although she was not probably aware of the cause. But Rose Flammock, unbidden, followed her mistress without hesitation, as Berwine conducted her through a small wicket at the upper end of the apartment, clenched with many an iron nail, into a second but smaller ante-room or wardrobe, at the end of which was a similar door. This wardrobe had also its casement mantled with evergreens, and, like the former, it was faintly enlightened by the moonbeam.

Berwine paused here, and, pointing to Rose, demanded of Eveline, 'Why does *she* follow?'

'To share my mistress's danger, be it what it may,' answered Rose, with her characteristic readiness of speech and resolution. 'Speak,' she said, 'my dearest lady,' grasping Eveline's hand, which she addressed her; 'you will not drive your Rose from you? If I am less high-minded than one of your boasted race, I am bold and quick-witted in all honest service. You tremble like the aspen! Do not go into this apartment; do not be

gulled by all this pomp and mystery of terrible preparation; bid defiance to this antiquated, and, I think, half-pagan, superstition.'

'The Lady Eveline must go, minion,' replied Berwine, sternly; 'and she must go without any malapert adviser or companion.'

'Must go — *must* go!' repeated Rose. 'Is this language to a free and noble maiden? Sweet lady, give me once but the least hint that you wish it, and their "*must* go" shall be put to the trial. I will call from the casement on the Norman cavaliers, and tell them we have fallen into a den of witches instead of a house of hospitality.'

'Silence, madwoman!' said Berwine, her voice quivering with anger and fear; 'you know not who dwells in the next chamber!'

'I will call those who will soon see to that,' said Rose, flying to the casement, when Eveline, seizing her arm in her turn, compelled her to stop.

'I thank thy kindness, Rose,' she said, 'but it cannot help me in this matter. She who enters yonder door must do so alone.'

'Then I will enter it in your stead, my dearest lady,' said Rose. 'You are pale — you are cold — you will die of terror if you go on. There may be as much of trick as of supernatural agency in this matter: me they shall not deceive, or, if some stern spirit craves a victim, better Rose than her lady.'

'Forbear — forbear,' said Eveline, rousing up her own spirits; 'you make me ashamed of myself. This is an ancient ordeal, which regards the females descended from the house of Baldringham as far as in the third degree, and them only. I did not indeed expect, in my present circumstances, to have been called upon to undergo it; but, since the hour summons me, I will meet it as freely as any of my ancestors.'

So saying, she took the torch from the hand of Berwine, and wishing good-night to her and Rose, gently disengaged herself from the hold of the latter, and advanced into the mysterious chamber. Rose pressed after her so far as to see that it was an apartment of moderate dimensions, resembling that through which they had last passed, and lighted by the moonbeams, which came through a window lying on the same range with those of the ante-rooms. More she could not see, for Eveline turned on the threshold, and, kissing her at the same time, thrust her gently back into the smaller apartment

which she had just left, shut the door of communication, and barred and bolted it, as if in security against her well-meant intrusion.

Berwine now exhorted Rose, as she valued her life, to retire into the first ante-room, where the beds were prepared, and betake herself, if not to rest, at least to silence and devotion; but the faithful Flemish girl stoutly refused her entreaties and resisted her commands.

'Talk not to me of danger,' she said; 'here I remain, that I may be at least within hearing of my mistress's danger; and woe betide those who shall offer her injury! Take notice, that twenty Norman spears surround this inhospitable dwelling, prompt to avenge whatsoever injury shall be offered to the daughter of Raymond Berenger.'

'Reserve your threats for those who are mortal,' said Berwine, in a low but piercing whisper; 'the owner of yonder chamber fears them not. Farewell — thy danger be on thine own head!'

She departed, leaving Rose strangely agitated by what had passed, and somewhat appalled at her last words. 'These Saxons,' said the maiden, within herself, 'are but half converted after all, and hold many of their old hellish rites in the worship of elementary spirits. Their very saints are unlike to the saints of any Christian country, and have, as it were, a look of something savage and fiendish; their very names sound pagan and diabolical. It is fearful being alone here; and all is silent as death in the apartment into which my lady has been thus strangely compelled. Shall I call up Gillian? But no; she has neither sense, nor courage, nor principle, to aid me on such an occasion: better alone than have a false friend for company. I will see if the Normans are on their post, since it is to them I must trust if a moment of need should arrive.'

Thus reflecting, Rose Flammock went to the window of the little apartment, in order to satisfy herself of the vigilance of the sentinels, and to ascertain the exact situation of the *corps de guarde*. The moon was at the full, and enabled her to see with accuracy the nature of the ground without. In the first place, she was rather disappointed to find that, instead of being so near the earth as she supposed, the range of windows, which gave light as well to the two ante-rooms as to the mysterious chamber itself, looked down upon an ancient moat, by which they were divided from the level ground on the farther side. The defence which this fosse afforded seemed to have been long

neglected, and the bottom, entirely dry, was choked in many places with bushes and low trees, which rose up against the wall of the castle, and by means of which it seemed to Rose the windows might be easily scaled and the mansion entered. From the level plain beyond, the space adjoining to the castle was in a considerable degree clear, and the moonbeams slumbered on its close and beautiful turf, mixed with long shadows of the towers and trees. Beyond this esplanade lay the forest ground, with a few gigantic oaks scattered individually along the skirt of its dark and ample domain, like champions who take their ground of defiance in front of a line of arrayed battle.

The calm beauty and repose of a scene so lovely, the stillness of all around, and the more matured reflections which the whole suggested, quieted, in some measure, the apprehensions which the events of the evening had inspired. 'After all,' she reflected, 'why should I be so anxious on account of the Lady Eveline? There is among the proud Normans and the dogged Saxons scarce a single family of note but must needs be held distinguished from others by some superstitious observance peculiar to their race, as if they thought it scorn to go to Heaven like a poor simple Fleming such as I am. Could I but see a Norman sentinel, I would hold myself satisfied of my mistress's security. And yonder one stalks along the gloom, wrapt in his long white mantle, and the moon tipping the point of his lance with silver. What ho, sir cavalier!'

The Norman turned his steps, and approached the ditch as she spoke. 'What is your pleasure, damsel?' he demanded.

'The window next to mine is that of the Lady Eveline Berenger, whom you are appointed to guard. Please to give heedful watch upon this side of the castle.'

'Doubt it not, lady,' answered the cavalier; and, enveloping himself in his long *chappe*, or military watch-cloak, he withdrew to a large oak-tree at some distance, and stood there with folded arms, and leaning on his lance, more like a trophy of armour than a living warrior.

Emboldened by the consciousness that in case of need succour was close at hand, Rose drew back into her little chamber, and having ascertained, by listening, that there was no noise or stirring in that of Eveline, she began to make some preparations for her own repose. For this purpose she went into the outward ante-room, where Dame Gillian, whose fears had given way to the soporiferous effects of a copious draught of *lithe-alos* (mild

ale, of the first strength and quality), slept as sound a sleep as that generous Saxon beverage could procure.

Muttering an indignant censure on her sloth and indifference, Rose caught, from the empty couch which had been destined for her own use, the upper covering, and dragging it with her into the inner ante-room, disposed it so as, with the assistance of the rushes which strewed that apartment, to form a sort of couch, upon which, half seated, half reclined, she resolved to pass the night in as close attendance upon her mistress as circumstances permitted.

Thus seated, her eye on the pale planet which sailed in full glory through the blue sky of midnight, she proposed to herself that sleep should not visit her eyelids till the dawn of morning should assure her of Eveline's safety.

Her thoughts, meanwhile, rested on the boundless and shadowy world beyond the grave, and on the great, and perhaps yet undecided, question, whether the separation of its inhabitants from those of this temporal sphere is absolute and decided, or whether, influenced by motives which we cannot appreciate, they continue to hold shadowy communication with those yet existing in earthly reality of flesh and blood? To have denied this would, in the age of crusades and of miracles, have incurred the guilt of heresy; but Rose's firm good sense led her to doubt at least the frequency of supernatural interference, and she comforted herself with an opinion, contradicted, however, by her own involuntary starts and shudderings at every leaf which moved, that, in submitting to the performance of the rite imposed on her, Eveline incurred no real danger, and only sacrificed to an obsolete family superstition.

As this conviction strengthened on Rose's mind, her purpose of vigilance began to decline; her thoughts wandered to objects towards which they were not directed, like sheep which stray beyond the charge of their shepherd; her eyes no longer brought back to her a distinct apprehension of the broad, round, silvery orb on which they continued to gaze. At length they closed, and seated on the folded mantle, her back resting against the wall of the apartment, and her white arms folded on her bosom, Rose Flammock fell fast asleep.

Her repose was fearfully broken by a shrill and piercing shriek from the apartment where her lady reposed. To start up and fly to the door was the work of a moment with the generous girl, who never permitted fear to struggle with love or duty. The door was secured with both bar and bolt; and

another fainter scream, or rather groan, seemed to say, aid must be instant, or in vain. Rose next rushed to the window, and screamed rather than called to the Norman soldier, who, distinguished by the white folds of his watch-cloak, still retained his position under the old oak-tree.

At the cry of 'Help — help! the Lady Eveline is murdered!' the seeming statue, starting at once into active exertion, sped with the swiftness of a race-horse to the brink of the moat, and was about to cross it, opposite to the spot where Rose stood at the open casement, urging him to speed by voice and gesture.

'Not here — not here!' she exclaimed with breathless precipitation, as she saw him make towards her — 'the window to the right, — scale it, for God's sake, and undo the door of communication.'

The soldier seemed to comprehend her; he dashed into the moat without hesitation, securing himself by catching at the boughs of trees as he descended. In one moment he vanished among the underwood; and in another, availing himself of the branches of a dwarf oak, Rose saw him upon her right, and close to the window of the fatal apartment. One fear remained — the casement might be secured against entrance from without; but no! at the thrust of the Norman it yielded, and, its clasps or fastenings being worn with time, fell inward with a crash which even Dame Gillian's slumbers were unable to resist.

Echoing scream upon scream, in the usual fashion of fools and cowards, she entered the cabinet from the ante-room, just as the door of Eveline's chamber opened, and the soldier appeared, bearing in his arms the half-undressed and lifeless form of the Norman maiden herself. Without speaking a word, he placed her in Rose's arms, and, with the same precipitation with which he had entered, threw himself out of the opened window from which Rose had summoned him.

Gillian, half distracted with fear and wonder, heaped exclamations on questions, and mingled questions with cries for help, till Rose sternly rebuked her in a tone which seemed to recall her scattered senses. She became then composed enough to fetch a lamp which remained lighted in the room she had left, and to render herself at least partly useful in suggesting and applying the usual modes for recalling the suspended sense. In this they at length succeeded, for Eveline fetched a fuller sigh, and opened her eyes; but presently shut them again, and letting her head drop on Rose's bosom, fell into a strong shudder-

ing fit; while her faithful damsel, chafing her hands and her temples alternately with affectionate assiduity, and mingling caresses with these efforts, exclaimed aloud, 'She lives! She is recovering! Praised be God!'

'Praised be God!' was echoed in a solemn tone from the window of the apartment; and turning towards it in terror, Rose beheld the armed and plumed head of the soldier who had come so opportunely to their assistance, and who, supported by his arms, had raised himself so high as to be able to look into the interior of the cabinet.

Rose immediately ran towards him. 'Go — go, good friend,' she said; 'the lady recovers — your reward shall await you another time. Go — begone! Yet stay — keep on your post, and I will call you if there is farther need. Begone — be faithful and be secret.'

The soldier obeyed without answering a word, and she presently saw him descend into the moat. Rose then returned back to her mistress, whom she found supported by Gillian, moaning feebly, and muttering hurried and unintelligible ejaculations, all intimating that she laboured under a violent shock sustained from some alarming cause.

Dame Gillian had no sooner recovered some degree of self-possession than her curiosity became active in proportion. 'What means all this?' she said to Rose — 'what has been doing among you?'

'I do not know,' replied Rose.

'If you do not,' said Gillian, 'who should? Shall I call the other women and raise the house?'

'Not for your life,' said Rose, 'till my lady is able to give her own orders; and for this apartment, so help me Heaven, as I will do my best to discover the secrets it contains! Support my mistress the whilst.'

So saying, she took the lamp in her hand, and, crossing her brow, stepped boldly across the mysterious threshold, and, holding up the light, surveyed the apartment.

It was merely an old vaulted chamber of very moderate dimensions. In one corner was an image of the Virgin, rudely cut, and placed above a Saxon font of curious workmanship. There were two seats, and a couch covered with coarse tapestry, on which it seemed that Eveline had been reposing. The fragments of the shattered casement lay on the floor; but that opening had been only made when the soldier forced it in, and she saw no other access by which a stranger could have entered

an apartment the ordinary access to which was barred and bolted.

Rose felt the influence of those terrors which she had hitherto surmounted; she cast her mantle hastily around her head, as if to shroud her sight from some blighting vision, and tripping back to the cabinet with more speed and a less firm step than when she left it, she directed Gillian to lend her assistance in conveying Eveline to the next room; and having done so, carefully secured the door of communication, as if to put a barrier betwixt them and the suspected danger.

The Lady Eveline was now so far recovered that she could sit up, and was trying to speak, though but faintly. 'Rose,' she said at length, 'I have seen her — my doom is sealed.'

Rose immediately recollected the imprudence of suffering Gillian to hear what her mistress might say at such an awful moment, and hastily adopting the proposal she had before declined, desired her to go and call other two maidens of their mistress's household.

'And where am I to find them in this house,' said Dame Gillian, 'where strange men run about one chamber at midnight, and devils, for aught I know, frequent the rest of the habitation?'

'Find them where you can,' said Rose, sharply; 'but begone presently.'

Gillian withdrew lingeringly, and muttering at the same time something which could not distinctly be understood. No sooner was she gone than Rose, giving way to the enthusiastic affection which she felt for her mistress, implored her, in the most tender terms, to 'Open her eyes (for she had again closed them), and speak to Rose, her own Rose, who was ready, if necessary, to die by her mistress's side.'

'To-morrow — to-morrow, Rose,' murmured Eveline; 'I cannot speak at present.'

'Only disburden your mind with one word: tell what has thus alarmed you — what danger you apprehend.'

'I have seen her,' answered Eveline — 'I have seen the tenant of yonder chamber — the vision fatal to my race! Urge me no more; to-morrow you shall know all.'[1]

As Gillian entered with two of the maidens of her mistress's household, they removed the lady Eveline, by Rose's directions, into a chamber at some distance, which the latter had occupied, and placed her in one of their beds, where Rose, dismissing the

[1] See Bahr-geist. Note 10.

others (Gillian excepted) to seek repose where they could find it, continued to watch her mistress. For some time she continued very much disturbed, but, gradually, fatigue, and the influence of some narcotic which Gillian had sense enough to recommend and prepare, seemed to compose her spirits. She fell into a deep slumber, from which she did not awaken until the sun was high over the distant hills.

CHAPTER XV

I see a hand you cannot see,
Which beckons me away;
I hear a voice you cannot hear,
Which says I must not stay.

MALLET.

WHEN Eveline first opened her eyes, it seemed to be without any recollection of what had passed on the night preceding. She looked round the apartment, which was coarsely and scantily furnished, as one destined for the use of domestics and menials, and said to Rose, with a smile, 'Our good kinswoman maintains the ancient Saxon hospitality at a homely rate, so far as lodging is concerned. I could have willingly parted with last night's profuse supper, to have obtained a bed of a softer texture. Methinks my limbs feel as if I had been under all the flails of a franklin's barn-yard.'

'I am glad to see you so pleasant, madam,' answered Rose, discreetly avoiding any reference to the events of the night before.

Dame Gillian was not so scrupulous. 'Your ladyship last night lay down on a better bed than this,' she said, 'unless I am much mistaken; and Rose Flammock and yourself know best why you left it.'

If a look could have killed, Dame Gillian would have been in deadly peril from that which Rose shot at her, by way of rebuke for this ill-advised communication. It had instantly the effect which was to be apprehended, for Lady Eveline seemed at first surprised and confused, then, as recollections of the past arranged themselves in her memory, she folded her hands, looked on the ground, and wept bitterly, with much agitation.

Rose entreated her to be comforted, and offered to fetch the old Saxon chaplain of the house to administer spiritual consolation, if her grief rejected temporal comfort.

'No, call him not,' said Eveline, raising her head and drying her eyes: 'I have had enough of Saxon kindness. What a fool was I to expect, in that hard and unfeeling woman, any commiseration for my youth — my late sufferings — my orphan condition! I will not permit her a poor triumph over the Norman blood of Berenger, by letting her see how much I have suffered under her inhuman infliction. But first, Rose, answer me truly, was any inmate of Baldringham witness to my distress last night?'

Rose assured her that she had been tended exclusively by her own retinue, herself and Gillian, Blanche and Ternotte. She seemed to receive satisfaction from this assurance. 'Hear me, both of you,' she said, 'and observe my words, as you love and as you fear me. Let no syllable be breathed from your lips of what has happened this night. Carry the same charge to my maidens. Lend me thine instant aid, Gillian, and thine, my dearest Rose, to change these disordered garments and arrange this dishevelled hair. It was a poor vengeance she sought, and all because of my country. I am resolved she shall not see the slightest trace of the sufferings she has inflicted.'

As she spoke thus, her eyes flashed with indignation, which seemed to dry up the tears that had before filled them. Rose saw the change of her manner with a mixture of pleasure and concern, being aware that her mistress's predominant failing was incident to her, as a spoiled child, who, accustomed to be treated with kindness, deference, and indulgence by all around her, was apt to resent warmly whatever resembled neglect or contradiction.

'God knows,' said the faithful bower-maiden, 'I would hold my hand out to catch drops of molten lead, rather than endure your tears; and yet, my sweet mistress, I would rather at present see you grieved than angry. This ancient lady hath, it would seem, but acted according to some old superstitious rite of her family, which is in part yours. Her name is respectable, both from her conduct and possessions; and, hard-pressed as you are by the Normans, with whom your kinswoman, the Princess, is sure to take part, I was in hope you might have had some shelter and countenance from the Lady of Baldringham.'

'Never, Rose — never,' answered Eveline: 'you know not — you cannot guess what she has made me suffer, exposing me to witchcraft and fiends. Thyself said it, and said it true —

the Saxons are still half pagans, void of Christianity, as of nurture and kindliness.'

'Ay, but,' replied Rose, 'I spoke then to dissuade you from a danger; now that the danger is passed and over, I may judge of it otherwise.'

'Speak not for them, Rose,' replied Eveline, angrily; 'no innocent victim was ever offered up at the altar of a fiend with more indifference than my father's kinswoman delivered up me — me an orphan, bereaved of my natural and powerful support. I hate her cruelty — I hate her house — I hate the thought of all that has happened here — of all, Rose, except thy matchless faith and fearless attachment. Go, bid our train saddle directly; I will be gone instantly. I will not attire myself,' she added, rejecting the assistance she had at first required — 'I will have no ceremony — tarry for no leave-taking.'

In the hurried and agitated manner of her mistress, Rose recognised with anxiety another mood of the same irritable and excited temperament which had before discharged itself in tears and fits. But perceiving, at the same time, that remonstrance was in vain, she gave the necessary orders for collecting their company, saddling, and preparing for departure; hoping that, as her mistress removed to a farther distance from the scene where her mind had received so severe a shock, her equanimity might, by degrees, be restored.

Dame Gillian, accordingly, was busied with arranging the packages of her lady, and all the rest of Lady Eveline's retinue in preparing for instant departure, when, preceded by her steward, who acted also as a sort of gentleman-usher, leaning upon her confidential Berwine, and followed by two or three more of the most distinguished of her household, with looks of displeasure on her ancient yet lofty brow, the Lady Ermengarde entered the apartment.

Eveline, with a trembling and hurried hand, a burning cheek, and other signs of agitation, was herself busied about the arrangement of some baggage, when her relation made her appearance. At once, to Rose's great surprise, she exerted a strong command over herself, and, repressing every external appearance of disorder, she advanced to meet her relation, with a calm and haughty stateliness equal to her own.

'I come to give you good morning, our niece,' said Ermengarde, haughtily indeed, yet with more deference than she seemed at first to have intended, so much did the bearing of Eveline impose respect upon her. 'I find that you have been

pleased to shift that chamber which was assigned you, in conformity with the ancient custom of this household, and betake yourself to the apartment of a menial.'

'Are you surprised at that, lady?' demanded Eveline in her turn; 'or are you disappointed that you find me not a corpse, within the limits of the chamber which your hospitality and affection allotted to me?'

'Your sleep, then, has been broken?' said Ermengarde, looking fixedly at the Lady Eveline as she spoke.

'If I complain not, madam, the evil must be deemed of little consequence. What has happened is over and past, and it is not my intention to trouble you with the recital.'

'She of the ruddy finger,' replied Ermengarde, triumphantly, 'loves not the blood of the stranger.'

'She had less reason, while she walked the earth, to love that of the Saxon,' said Eveline, 'unless her legend speaks false in that matter; and unless, as I well suspect, your house is haunted, not by the soul of the dead who suffered within its walls, but by evil spirits, such as the descendants of Hengist and Horsa are said still in secret to worship.'

'You are pleasant, maiden,' replied the old lady, scornfully, 'or, if your words are meant in earnest, the shaft of your censure has glanced aside. A house blessed by the holy St. Dunstan and by the royal and holy Confessor is no abode for evil spirits.'

'The house of Baldringham,' replied Eveline, 'is no abode for those who fear such spirits; and as I will, with all humility, avow myself of the number, I shall presently leave it to the custody of St. Dunstan.'

'Not till you have broken your fast, I trust?' said the Lady of Baldringham; 'you will not, I hope, do my years and our relationship such foul disgrace?'

'Pardon me, madam,' replied the Lady Eveline; 'those who have experienced your hospitality at night have little occasion for breakfast in the morning. Rose, are not those loitering knaves assembled in the courtyard, or are they yet on their couches, making up for the slumber they have lost by midnight disturbances?'

Rose announced that her train was in the court, and mounted; when, with a low reverence, Eveline endeavoured to pass her relation, and leave the apartment without farther ceremony. Ermengarde at first confronted her with a grim and furious glance, which seemed to show a soul fraught with more rage

than the thin blood and rigid features of extreme old age had the power of expressing, and raised her ebony staff as if about even to proceed to some act of personal violence. But she changed her purpose, and suddenly made way for Eveline, who passed without further parley; and as she descended the staircase which conducted from the apartment to the gateway, she heard the voice of her aunt behind her, like that of an aged and offended sibyl, denouncing wrath and woe upon her insolence and presumption.

'Pride,' she exclaimed, 'goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall. She who scorneth the house of her forefathers, a stone from its battlements shall crush her! She who mocks the grey hairs of a parent, never shall one of her own locks be silvered with age! She who weds with a man of war and of blood, her end shall neither be peaceful nor bloodless!'

Hurrying to escape from these and other ominous denunciations, Eveline rushed from the house, mounted her palfrey with the precipitation of a fugitive, and, surrounded by her attendants, who had caught a part of her alarm, though without conjecturing the cause, rode hastily into the forest; old Raoul, who was well acquainted with the country, acting as their guide.

Agitated more than she was willing to confess to herself, by thus leaving the habitation of so near a relation, loaded with maledictions instead of the blessings which are usually bestowed on a departing kinswoman, Eveline hastened forward, until the huge oak-trees with intervening arms had hidden from her view the fatal mansion.

The trampling and galloping of horse was soon after heard, announcing the approach of the patrol left by the Constable for the protection of the mansion, and who now, collecting from their different stations, came prepared to attend the Lady Eveline on her farther road to Gloucester, great part of which lay through the extensive forest of Dean, then a silvan region of large extent, though now much denuded of trees for the service of the iron-mines. The cavaliers came up to join the retinue of Lady Eveline, with armour glittering in the morning rays, trumpets sounding, horses prancing, neighing, and thrown, each by his chivalrous rider, into the attitude best qualified to exhibit the beauty of the steed and dexterity of the horseman; while their lances, streaming with long penoncelles, were brandished in every manner which could display elation of

heart and readiness of hand. The sense of the military character of her countrymen of Normandy gave to Eveline a feeling at once of security and of triumph, which operated towards the dispelling of her gloomy thoughts, and of the feverish disorder which affected her nerves. The rising sun also, the song of the birds among the bowers, the lowing of the cattle as they were driven to pasture, the sight of the hind, who, with her fawn trotting by her side, often crossed some forest glade within view of the travellers — all contributed to dispel the terror of Eveline's nocturnal visions, and soothe to rest the more angry passions which had agitated her bosom at her departure from Baldringham. She suffered her palfrey to slacken his pace, and, with female attention to propriety, began to adjust her riding-robes and compose her head-dress, disordered in her hasty departure. Rose saw her cheek assume a paler but more settled hue, instead of the angry hectic which had coloured it, saw her eye become more steady as she looked with a sort of triumph upon her military attendants, and pardoned, what on other occasions she would probably have made some reply to, her enthusiastic exclamations in praise of her countrymen.

'We journey safe,' said Eveline, 'under the care of the princely and victorious Normans. Theirs is the noble wrath of the lion, which destroys or is appeased at once; there is no guile in their romantic affection, no sullenness mixed with their generous indignation; they know the duties of the hall as well as those of battle; and were they to be surpassed in the arts of war, which will only be when Plinlimmon is removed from its base, they would still remain superior to every other people in generosity and courtesy.'

'If I do not feel all their merits so strongly as if I shared their blood,' said Rose, 'I am at least glad to see them around us, in woods which are said to abound with dangers of various kinds. And I confess my heart is the lighter that I can now no longer observe the least vestige of that ancient mansion, in which we passed so unpleasant a night, and the recollection of which will always be odious to me.'

Eveline looked sharply at her. 'Confess the truth, Rose; thou wouldst give thy best kirtle to know all of my horrible adventure.'

'It is but confessing that I am a woman,' answered Rose; 'and did I say a man, I daresay the difference of sex would imply but a small abatement of curiosity.'

'Thou makest no parade of other feelings which prompt thee to inquire into my fortunes,' said Eveline; 'but, sweet Rose, I give thee not the less credit for them. Believe me, thou shalt know all — but, I think, not now.'

'At your pleasure,' said Rose; 'and yet, methinks, the bearing in your solitary bosom such a fearful secret will only render the weight more intolerable. On my silence you may rely as on that of the Holy Image, which hears us confess what it never reveals. Besides, such things become familiar to the imagination when they have been spoken of, and that which is familiar gradually becomes stripped of its terrors.'

'Thou speakest with reason, my prudent Rose; and surely in this gallant troop, borne like a flower on a bush by my good palfrey Yseulte, fresh gales blowing round us, flowers opening and birds singing, and having thee by my bridle-rein, I ought to feel this a fitting time to communicate what thou hast so good a title to know. And — yes! thou shalt know all! Thou art not, I presume, ignorant of the qualities of what the Saxons of this land call a *bahr-geist?*'

'Pardon me, lady,' answered Rose, 'my father discouraged my listening to such discourses. I might see evil spirits enough, he said, without my imagination being taught to form such as were fantastical. The word "bahr-geist" I have heard used by Gillian and other Saxons; but to me it only conveys some idea of indefinite terror, of which I have never asked nor received an explanation.'

'Know then,' said Eveline, 'it is a spectre, usually the image of a departed person, who, either for wrong sustained in some particular place during life, or through treasure hidden there, or from some such other cause, haunts the spot from time to time, becomes familiar to those who dwell there, takes an interest in their fate, occasionally for good, in other instances or times for evil. The bahr-geist is, therefore, sometimes regarded as the good genius, sometimes as the avenging fiend, attached to particular families and classes of men. It is the lot of the family of Baldringham — of no mean note in other respects — to be subject to the visits of such a being.'

'May I ask the cause, if it be known, of such visitation?' said Rose, desirous to avail herself to the uttermost of the communicative mood of her young lady, which might not perhaps last very long.

'I know the legend but imperfectly,' replied Eveline, proceeding with a degree of calmness, the result of strong exertion

over her mental anxiety, 'but in general it runs thus: — Baldrick, the Saxon hero who first possessed yonder dwelling, became enamoured of a fair Briton, said to have been descended from those Druids of whom the Welsh speak so much, and deemed not unacquainted with the arts of sorcery which they practised, when they offered up human sacrifices amid those circles of unhewn and living rock, of which thou hast seen so many. After more than two years' wedlock, Baldrick became weary of his wife to such a point, that he formed the cruel resolution of putting her to death. Some say he doubted her fidelity; some that the matter was pressed on him by the church, as she was suspected of heresy; some that he removed her to make way for a more wealthy marriage; but all agree in the result. He sent two of his cnichts to the house of Baldringham, to put to death the unfortunate Vanda, and commanded them to bring him the ring which had circled her finger on the day of wedlock, in token that his orders were accomplished. The men were ruthless in their office: they strangled Vanda in yonder apartment, and as the hand was so swollen that no effort could draw off the ring, they obtained possession of it by severing the finger. But long before the return of those cruel perpetrators of her death, the shadow of Vanda had appeared before her appalled husband, and holding up to him her bloody hand, made him fearfully sensible how well his savage commands had been obeyed. After haunting him in peace and war, in desert, court, and camp, until he died despairingly on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the bahr-geist, or ghost, of the murdered Vanda became so terrible in the house of Baldringham that the succour of St. Dunstan was itself scarcely sufficient to put bounds to her visitation. Yea, the blessed saint, when he had succeeded in his exorcism, did, in requital of Baldrick's crime, impose a strong and enduring penalty upon every female descendant of the house in the third degree; namely, that once in their lives, and before their twenty-first year, they should each spend a solitary night in the chamber of the murdered Vanda, saying therein certain prayers, as well for her repose as for the suffering soul of her murderer. During that awful space, it is generally believed that the spirit of the murdered person appears to the female who observes the vigil, and shows some sign of her future good or bad fortune. If favourable, she appears with a smiling aspect, and crosses them with her unbloodied hand; but she announces evil fortune by showing the hand from which the finger was severed, with a stern coun-

tenance, as if resenting upon the descendant of her husband his inhuman cruelty. Sometimes she is said to speak. These particulars I learned long since from an old Saxon dame, the mother of our Margery, who had been an attendant on my grandmother, and left the house of Baldringham when she made her escape from it with my father's father.'

'Did your grandmother ever render this homage,' said Rose, 'which seems to me — under favour of St. Dunstan — to bring humanity into too close intercourse with a being of a doubtful nature?'

'My grandfather thought so, and never permitted my grandmother to revisit the house of Baldringham after her marriage; hence disunion betwixt him and his son on the one part and the members of that family on the other. They laid sundry misfortunes, and particularly the loss of male heirs which at that time befell them, to my parent's not having done the hereditary homage to the bloody-fingered bahr-geist.'

'And how could you, my dearest lady,' said Rose, 'knowing that they held among them a usage so hideous, think of accepting the invitation of Lady Ermengarde?'

'I can hardly answer you the question,' replied Eveline. 'Partly I feared my father's recent calamity, to be slain, as I have heard him say his aunt once prophesied of him, by the enemy he most despised, might be the result of this rite having been neglected; and partly I hoped that, if my mind should be appalled at the danger, when it presented itself closer to my eye, it could not be urged on me in courtesy and humanity. You saw how soon my cruel-hearted relative pounced upon the opportunity, and how impossible it became for me, bearing the name, and, I trust, the spirit, of Berenger, to escape from the net in which I had involved myself.'

'No regard for name or rank should have engaged me,' replied Rose, 'to place myself where apprehension alone, even without the terrors of a real visitation, might have punished my presumption with insanity. But what, in the name of Heaven, did you see at this horrible rendezvous?'

'Ay, there is the question,' said Eveline, raising her hand to her brow — 'how I could witness that which I distinctly saw, yet be able to retain command of thought and intellect! I had recited the prescribed devotions for the murderer and his victim, and sitting down on the couch which was assigned me, had laid aside such of my clothes as might impede my rest — I had surmounted, in short, the first shock which I experienced

in committing myself to this mysterious chamber, and I hoped to pass the night in slumber as sound as my thoughts were innocent. But I was fearfully disappointed. I cannot judge how long I had slept, when my bosom was oppressed by an unusual weight, which seemed at once to stifle my voice, stop the beating of my heart, and prevent me from drawing my breath; and when I looked up to discover the cause of this horrible suffocation, the form of the murdered British matron stood over my couch, taller than life, shadowy, and with a countenance where traits of dignity and beauty were mingled with a fierce expression of vengeful exultation. She held over me the hand which bore the bloody marks of her husband's cruelty, and seemed as if she signed the cross, devoting me to destruction; while, with an unearthly tone, she uttered these words —

"Widow'd wife, and wedded maid,
Betrothed, betrayer, and betray'd!"

The phantom stooped over me as she spoke, and lowered her gory fingers, as if to touch my face, when, terror giving me the power of which at first it deprived me, I screamed aloud — the casement of the apartment was thrown open with a loud noise — and —— But what signifies my telling all this to thee, Rose, who show so plainly, by the movement of eye and lip, that you consider me as a silly and childish dreamer?'

'Be not angry, my dear lady,' said Rose; 'I do indeed believe that the witch we call Mara has been dealing with you; but she, you know, is by leeches considered as no real phantom, but solely the creation of our own imagination, disordered by causes which arise from bodily indisposition.'

'Thou art learned, maiden,' said Eveline, rather peevishly; 'but when I assure thee that my better angel came to my assistance in a human form, that at his appearance the fiend vanished, and that he transported me in his arms out of the chamber of terror, I think thou wilt, as a good Christian, put more faith in that which I tell you.'

'Indeed — indeed, my sweetest mistress, I cannot,' replied Rose. 'It is even that circumstance of the guardian angel which makes me consider the whole as a dream. A Norman sentinel, whom I myself called from his post on purpose, did indeed come to your assistance, and, breaking into your apartment, transported you to that where I myself received you from his arms in a lifeless condition.'

'A Norman soldier, ha!' said Eveline, colouring extremely; 'and to whom, maiden, did you dare give commission to break into my sleeping-chamber?'

'Your eyes flash anger, madam, but is it reasonable they should? Did I not hear your screams of agony, and was I to stand fettered by ceremony at such a moment?—no more than if the castle had been on fire.'

'I ask you again, Rose,' said her mistress, still with discomposure, though less angrily than at first, 'whom you directed to break into my apartment?'

'Indeed, I know not, lady,' said Rose; 'for, besides that he was muffled in his mantle, little chance was there of my knowing his features, even had I seen them fully. But I can soon discover the cavalier; and I will set about it, that I may give him the reward I promised, and warn him to be silent and discreet in this matter.'

'Do so,' said Eveline; 'and if you find him among those soldiers who attend us, I will indeed lean to thine opinion, and think that fantasy had the chief share in the evils I have endured the last night.'

Rose struck her palfrey with the rod, and, accompanied by her mistress, rode up to Philip Guarine, the Constable's squire, who for the present commanded their little escort. 'Good Guarine,' she said, 'I had talk with one of these sentinels last night from my window, and he did me some service, for which I promised him recompense. Will you inquire for the man, that I may pay him his guerdon?'

'Truly, I will owe him a guerdon also, pretty maiden,' answered the squire; 'for if a lance of them approached near enough the house to hold speech from the windows, he transgressed the precise orders of his watch.'

'Tush! you must forgive that for my sake,' said Rose. 'I warrant, had I called on yourself, stout Guarine, I should have had influence to bring you under my chamber window.'

Guarine laughed, and shrugged his shoulders. 'True it is,' he said, 'when women are in place, discipline is in danger.'

He then went to make the necessary inquiries among his band, and returned with the assurance, that his soldiers, generally and severally, denied having approached the mansion of the Lady Ermengarde on the preceding night.

'Thou seest, Rose,' said Eveline, with a significant look to her attendant.

'The poor rogues . . afraid of Guarine's severity,' said Rose,

'and dare not tell the truth; I shall have some one in private claiming the reward of me.'

'I would I had the privilege myself, damsel,' said Guarine; 'but for these fellows, they are not so timorous as you suppose them, being even too ready to avouch their roguery when it hath less excuse. Besides, I promised them impunity. Have you anything farther to order?'

'Nothing, good Guarine,' said Eveline; 'only this small donative to procure wine for thy soldiers, that they may spend the next night more merrily than the last. And now he is gone. Maiden, thou must, I think, be now well aware that what thou sawest was no earthly being?'

'I must believe mine own ears and eyes, madam,' replied Rose.

'Do — but allow me the same privilege,' answered Eveline. 'Believe me that my deliverer, for so I must call him, bore the features of one who neither was, nor could be, in the neighbourhood of Baldringham. Tell me but one thing. What dost thou think of this extraordinary prediction —

> "Widow'd wife, and wedded maid,
> Betrothed, betrayer, and betrayed"?

Thou wilt say it is an idle invention of my brain; but think it for a moment the speech of a true diviner, and what wouldst thou say of it?'

'That you may be betrayed, my dearest lady, but never can be a betrayer,' answered Rose, with animation.

Eveline reached her hand out to her friend, and as she pressed affectionately that which Rose gave in return, she whispered to her with energy, 'I thank thee for the judgment, which my own heart confirms.'

A cloud of dust now announced the approach of the Constable of Chester and his retinue, augmented by the attendance of his host Sir William [Amelot] Herbert, and some of his neighbours and kinsmen, who came to pay their respects to the orphan of the Garde Doloureuse, by which appellation Eveline was known upon her passage through their territory.

Eveline remarked, that at their greeting De Lacy looked with displeased surprise at the disarrangement of her dress and equipage, which her hasty departure from Baldringham had necessarily occasioned; and she was, on her part, struck with an expression of countenance which seemed to say, 'I am not to be treated as an ordinary person, who may be received with

negligence, and treated slightly with impunity.' For the first time, she thought that, though always deficient in grace and beauty, the Constable's countenance was formed to express the more angry passions with force and vivacity, and that she who shared his rank and name must lay her account with the implicit surrender of her will and wishes to those of an arbitrary lord and master.

But the cloud soon passed from the Constable's brow; and in the conversation which he afterwards maintained with Herbert and the other knights and gentlemen, who from time to time came to greet and accompany them for a little way on their journey, Eveline had occasion to admire his superiority, both of sense and expression, and to remark the attention and deference with which his words were listened to by men too high in rank, and too proud, readily to admit any pre-eminence that was not founded on acknowledged merit. The regard of women is generally much influenced by the estimation which an individual maintains in the opinion of men; and Eveline, when she concluded her journey in the Benedictine nunnery in Gloucester, could not think without respect upon the renowned warrior and celebrated politician, whose acknowledged abilities appeared to place him above every one whom she had seen approach him. His wife, Eveline thought (and she was not without ambition), if relinquishing some of those qualities in a husband which are in youth most captivating to the female imagination, must be still generally honoured and respected, and have contentment, if not romantic felicity, within her reach.

CHAPTER XVI

THE Lady Eveline remained nearly four months with her aunt, the abbess of the Benedictine nunnery, under whose auspices the Constable of Chester saw his suit advance and prosper as it would probably have done under that of the deceased Raymond Berenger, her brother. It is probable, however, that, but for the supposed vision of the Virgin, and the vow of gratitude which that supposed vision had called forth, the natural dislike of so young a person to a match so unequal in years might have effectually opposed his success. Indeed, Eveline, while honouring the Constable's virtues, doing justice to his high character, and admiring his talents, could never altogether divest herself of a secret fear of him, which, while it prevented her from expressing any direct disapprobation of his addresses, caused her sometimes to shudder, she scarce knew why, at the idea of their becoming successful.

The ominous words, 'betraying and betrayed,' would then occur to her memory; and when her aunt (the period of the deepest mourning being elapsed) had fixed a day for her betrothal, she looked forward to it with a feeling of terror, for which she was unable to account to herself, and which, as well as the particulars of her dream, she concealed even from Father Aldrovand in the hours of confession. It was not aversion to the Constable; it was far less preference to any other suitor; it was one of those instinctive movements and emotions by which nature seems to warn us of approaching danger, though furnishing no information respecting its nature, and suggesting no means of escaping from it.

So strong were these intervals of apprehension, that, if they had been seconded by the remonstrances of Rose Flammock, as formerly, they might perhaps have led to Eveline's even yet forming some resolution unfavourable to the suit of the Constable. But, still more zealous for her lady's honour than even

for her happiness, Rose had strictly forborne every effort which could affect Eveline's purpose, when she had once expressed her approbation of De Lacy's addresses; and whatever she thought or anticipated concerning the proposed marriage, she seemed from that moment to consider it as an event which must necessarily take place.

De Lacy himself, as he learned more intimately to know the merit of the prize which he was desirous of possessing, looked forward with different feelings towards the union than those with which he had first proposed the measure to Raymond Berenger. It was then a mere match of interest and convenience, which had occurred to the mind of a proud and politic feudal lord, as the best mode of consolidating the power and perpetuating the line of his family. Now, did even the splendour of Eveline's beauty make that impression upon De Lacy which it was calculated to do on the fiery and impassioned chivalry of the age. He was past that period of life when the wise are captivated by outward form, and might have said with truth, as well as with discretion, that he could have wished his beautiful bride several years older, and possessed of a more moderate portion of personal charms, in order to have rendered the match more fitted for his own age and disposition. This stoicism, however, vanished, when, on repeated interviews with his destined bride, he found that she was indeed inexperienced in life, but desirous to be guided by superior wisdom; and that, although gifted with high spirit, and a disposition which began to recover its natural elastic gaiety, she was gentle, docile, and, above all, endowed with a firmness of principle which seemed to give assurance that she would tread uprightly, and without spot, the slippery paths in which youth, rank, and beauty are doomed to move.

As feelings of a warmer and more impassioned kind towards Eveline began to glow in De Lacy's bosom, his engagements as a crusader became more and more burdensome to him. The Benedictine abbess, the natural guardian of Eveline's happiness, added to these feelings by her reasoning and remonstrances. Although a nun and a devotee, she held in reverence the holy state of matrimony, and comprehended so much of it as to be aware that its important purposes could not be accomplished while the whole continent of Europe was interposed betwixt the married pair; for as to a hint from the Constable, that his young spouse might accompany him into the dangerous and dissolute precincts of the Crusaders' camp, the good lady crossed

herself with horror at the proposal, and never permitted it to be a second time mentioned in her presence.

It was not, however, uncommon for kings, princes, and other persons of high consequence, who had taken upon them the vow to rescue Jerusalem, to obtain delays, and even a total remission of their engagement, by proper application to the Church of Rome. The Constable was sure to possess the full advantage of his sovereign's interest and countenance, in seeking permission to remain in England, for he was the noble to whose valour and policy Henry had chiefly entrusted the defence of the disorderly Welsh marches; and it was by no means with his good-will that so useful a subject had ever assumed the cross.

It was settled, therefore, in private betwixt the abbess and the Constable, that the latter should solicit at Rome, and with the Pope's legate in England, a remission of his vow for at least two years — a favour which it was thought could scarce be refused to one of his wealth and influence, backed as it was with the most liberal offers of assistance towards the redemption of the Holy Land. His offers were indeed munificent; for he proposed, if his own personal attendance were dispensed with, to send an hundred lances at his own cost, each lance accompanied by two squires, three archers, and a varlet or horse-boy, being double the retinue by which his own person was to have been accompanied. He offered besides to deposit the sum of two thousand bezants to the general expenses of the expedition, to surrender to the use of the Christian armament those equipped vessels which he had provided, and which even now awaited the embarkation of himself and his followers.

Yet, while making these magnificent [illegible] the Constable could not help feeling they would be inadequate [illegible] the expectations of the rigid prelate Baldwin, [illegible] himself preached the crusade, and brought the Constable and many others into that holy engagement, must needs see with displeasure the work of his eloquence endangered, by the retreat of so important an associate from his favourite enterprise. To soften, therefore, his disappointment as much as possible, the Constable offered to the Archbishop, that, in the event of his obtaining license to remain in Britain, his forces should be led by his nephew, Damian Lacy, already renowned for his early feats of chivalry, the present hope of his house, and, failing heirs of his own body, its future head and support.

The Constable took the most prudent method of communi-

cating this proposal to the Archbishop Baldwin, through a mutual friend, on whose good offices he could depend, and whose interest with the prelate was regarded as great. But, notwithstanding the splendour of the proposal, the prelate heard it with sullen and obstinate silence, and referred for answer to a personal conference with the Constable at an appointed day, when concerns of the church would call the Archbishop to the city of Gloucester. The report of the mediator was such as induced the Constable to expect a severe struggle with the proud and powerful churchman; but, himself proud and powerful, and backed by the favour of his sovereign, he did not expect to be foiled in the contest.

The necessity that this point should be previously adjusted, as well as the recent loss of Eveline's father, gave an air of privacy to De Lacy's courtship, and prevented its being signalised by tournaments and feats of military skill, in which he would have been otherwise desirous to display his address in the eyes of his mistress. The rules of the convent prevented his giving entertainments of dancing, music, or other more pacific revels; and although the Constable displayed his affection by the most splendid gifts to his future bride and her attendants, the whole affair, in the opinion of the experienced Dame Gillian, proceeded more with the solemnity of a funeral than the light pace of an approaching bridal.

The bride herself felt something of this, and thought occasionally it might have been lightened by the visits of young Damian, in whose age, so nearly corresponding to her own, she might have expected some relief from the formal courtship of his graver uncle. But he came not, and from what the Constable said concerning him, she was led to imagine that the relations had, for a time at least, exchanged occupations and character. The elder De Lacy continued, indeed, in nominal observance of his vow, to dwell in a pavilion by the gates of Gloucester; but he seldom donned his armour, substituted costly damask and silk for his war-worn shamoy doublet, and affected at his advanced time of life more gaiety of attire than his contemporaries remembered as distinguishing his early youth. His nephew, on the contrary, resided almost constantly on the marches of Wales, occupied in settling by prudence, or subduing by main force, the various disturbances by which these provinces were continually agitated; and Eveline learned with surprise, that it was with difficulty his uncle had prevailed on him to be present at the ceremony of their being betrothed

to each other, or, as the Normans entitled the ceremony, their *fiançailles*. This engagement, which preceded the actual marriage for a space more or less, according to circumstances, was usually celebrated with a solemnity corresponding to the rank of the contracting parties.

The Constable added, with expressions of regret, that Damian gave himself too little rest, considering his early youth, slept too little, and indulged in too restless a disposition; that his health was suffering, and that a learned Jewish leech, whose opinion had been taken, had given his advice that the warmth of a more genial climate was necessary to restore his constitution to its general and natural vigour.

Eveline heard this with much regret, for she remembered Damian as the angel of good tidings, who first brought her news of deliverance from the forces of the Welsh; and the occasions on which they had met, though mournful, brought a sort of pleasure in recollection, so gentle had been the youth's deportment, and so consoling his expressions of sympathy. She wished she could see him, that she might herself judge of the nature of his illness; for, like other damsels of that age, she was not entirely ignorant of the art of healing, and had been taught by Father Aldrovand, himself no mean physician, how to extract healing essences from plants and herbs gathered under planetary hours. She thought it possible that her talents in this art, slight as they were, might perhaps be of service to one already her friend and liberator, and soon about to become her very near relation.

It was therefore with a sensation of pleasure, mingled with some confusion (at the idea, doubtless, of assuming the part of medical adviser to so young a patient), that one evening, while the convent was assembled about some business of their chapter, she heard Gillian announce that the kinsman of the Lord Constable desired to speak with her. She snatched up the veil which she wore in compliance with the customs of the house, and hastily descended to the parlour, commanding the attendance of Gillian, who, nevertheless, did not think proper to obey the signal.

When she entered the apartment, a man whom she had never seen before advanced, kneeled on one knee, and taking up the hem of her veil, saluted it with an air of the most profound respect. She stepped back, surprised and alarmed, although there was nothing in the appearance of the stranger to justify her apprehension. He seemed to be about thirty

years of age, tall of stature, and bearing a noble though wasted form, and a countenance on which disease, or perhaps youthful indulgence, had anticipated the traces of age. His demeanour seemed courteous and respectful, even in a degree which approached to excess. He observed Eveline's surprise, and said, in a tone of pride, mingled with emotion, 'I fear that I have been mistaken, and that my visit is regarded as an unwelcome intrusion.'

'Arise, sir,' answered Eveline, 'and let me know your name and business. I was summoned to a kinsman of the Constable of Chester.'

'And you expected the stripling Damian,' answered the stranger. 'But the match with which England rings will connect you with others of the house besides that young person; and amongst these with the luckless Randal de Lacy. Perhaps,' continued he, 'the fair Eveline Berenger may not even have heard his name breathed by his more fortunate kinsman — more fortunate in every respect, but *most* fortunate in his present prospects.'

This compliment was accompanied by a deep reverence, and Eveline stood much embarrassed how to reply to his civilities; for although she now well remembered to have heard this Randal slightly mentioned by the Constable when speaking of his family, it was in terms which implied that there was no good understanding betwixt them. She therefore only returned his courtesy by general thanks for the honour of his visit, trusting he would then retire; but such was not his purpose.

'I comprehend,' he said, 'from the coldness with which the Lady Eveline Berenger receives me, that what she has heard of me from my kinsman — if indeed he thought me worthy of being mentioned to her at all — has been, to say the least, unfavourable. And yet my name once stood as high in fields and courts as that of the Constable; nor is it aught more disgraceful than what is indeed often esteemed the worst of disgraces — poverty, which prevents my still aspiring to places of honour and fame. If my youthful follies have been numerous, I have paid for them by the loss of my fortune and the degradation of my condition; and therein my happy kinsman might, if he pleased, do me some aid. I mean not with his purse or estate; for, poor as I am, I would not live on alms extorted from the reluctant hand of an estranged friend; but his countenance would put him to no cost, and, in so far, I might expect some favour.'

'In that my Lord Constable,' said Eveline, 'must judge for himself. I have — as yet, at least — no right to interfere in his family affairs; and if I should ever have such right, it will well become me to be cautious how I use it.'

'It is prudently answered,' replied Randal; 'but what I ask of you is merely that you, in your gentleness, would please to convey to my cousin a suit, which I find it hard to bring my ruder tongue to utter with sufficient submission. The usurers, whose claims have eaten like a canker into my means, now menace me with a dungeon — a threat which they dared not mutter, far less attempt to execute, were it not that they see me an outcast, unprotected by the natural head of my family, and regard me rather as they would some unfriended vagrant than as a descendant of the powerful house of Lacy.'

'It is a sad necessity,' replied Eveline; 'but I see not how I can help you in such extremity.'

'Easily,' replied Randal de Lacy. 'The day of your betrothal is fixed, as I hear reported; and it is your right to select what witnesses you please to the solemnity, which may the saints bless! To every one but myself, presence or absence on that occasion is a matter of mere ceremony; to me it is almost life or death. So am I situated, that the marked instance of slight or contempt implied by my exclusion from this meeting of our family will be held for the signal of my final expulsion from the house of the De Lacys, and for a thousand bloodhounds to assail me without mercy or forbearance, whom, cowards as they are, even the slightest show of countenance from my powerful kinsman would compel to stand at bay. But why should I occupy your time in talking thus? Farewell, madam — be happy; and do not think of me the more harshly, that for a few minutes I have broken the tenor of your happy thoughts by forcing my misfortunes on your notice.'

'Stay, sir,' said Eveline, affected by the tone and manner of the noble suppliant; 'you shall not have it to say, that you have told your distress to Eveline Berenger without receiving such aid as is in her power to give. I will mention your request to the Constable of Chester.'

'You must do more, if you really mean to assist me,' said Randal de Lacy, 'you must make that request your own. You do not know,' said he, continuing to bend on her a fixed and expressive look, 'how hard it is to change the fixed purpose of a De Lacy; a twelvemonth hence you will probably be better acquainted with the firm texture of our resolutions. But, at

present, what can withstand your wish should you deign to express it?'

'Your suit, sir, shall not be lost for want of my advancing it with my good word and good wishes,' replied Eveline; 'but you must be well aware that its success or failure must rest with the Constable himself.'

Randal de Lacy took his leave with the same air of deep reverence which had marked his entrance; only that, as he then saluted the skirt of Eveline's robe, he now rendered the same homage by touching her hand with his lip. She saw him depart with a mixture of emotions, in which compassion was predominant; although in his complaints of the Constable's unkindness to him there was something offensive, and his avowal of follies and excess seemed uttered rather in the spirit of wounded pride than in that of contrition.

When Eveline next saw the Constable, she told him of the visit of Randal, and of his request; and strictly observing his countenance while she spoke, she saw that, at the first mention of his kinsman's name, a gleam of anger shot along his features. He soon subdued it, however, and, fixing his eyes on the ground, listened to Eveline's detailed account of the visit, and her request 'that Randal might be one of the invited witnesses to their *fiançailles*.'

The Constable paused for a moment, as if he were considering how to elude the solicitation. At length he replied, 'You do not know for whom you ask this, or you would perhaps have forborne your request; neither are you apprised of its full import, though my crafty cousin well knows that, when I do him this grace which he asks, I bind myself, as it were, in the eye of the world once more — and it will be for the third time — to interfere in his affairs, and place them on such a footing as may afford him the means of re-establishing his fallen consequence, and repairing his numerous errors.'

'And wherefore not, my lord?' said the generous Eveline. 'If he has been ruined only through follies, he is now of an age when these are no longer tempting snares; and if his heart and hand be good, he may yet be an honour to the house of De Lacy.

The Constable shook his head. 'He hath indeed,' he said, 'a heart and hand fit for service, God knoweth, whether in good or evil. But never shall it be said that you, my fair Eveline, made request of Hugo de Lacy which he was not to his uttermost willing to comply with. Randal shall attend at our

fiançailles. There is indeed the more cause for his attendance, as I somewhat fear we may lack that of our valued nephew Damian, whose malady rather increases than declines, and, as I hear, with strange symptoms of unwonted disturbance of mind and starts of temper, to which the youth hath not hitherto been subject.'

CHAPTER XVII

Ring out the merry bells, the bride approaches.
The blush upon her cheek has shamed the morning,
For that is dawning palely. Grant, good saints,
These clouds betoken nought of evil omen!

Old Play.

THE day of the *fiançailles*, or espousals, was now approaching; and it seems that neither the profession of the abbess, nor her practice at least, was so rigid as to prevent her selecting the great parlour of the convent for that holy rite, although necessarily introducing many male guests within those vestal precincts, and notwithstanding that the rite itself was the preliminary to a state which the inmates of the cloister had renounced for ever. The abbess's Norman pride of birth, and the real interest which she took in her niece's advancement, overcame all scruples; and the venerable mother might be seen in unwonted bustle, now giving orders to the gardener for decking the apartment with flowers, now to her cellaress, her precentrix, and the lay-sisters of the kitchen, for preparing a splendid banquet, mingling her commands on these worldly subjects with an occasional ejaculation on their vanity and worthlessness, and every now and then converting the busy and anxious looks which she threw upon her preparations into a solemn turning upward of eyes and folding of hands, as one who sighed over the mere earthly pomp which she took such trouble in superintending. At another time the good lady might have been seen in close consultation with Father Aldrovand, upon the ceremonial, civil and religious, which was to accompany a solemnity of such consequence to her family.

Meanwhile, the reins of discipline, although relaxed for a season, were not entirely thrown loose. The outer court of the convent was indeed for the time opened for the reception of the male sex; but the younger sisters and novices of the house, being carefully secluded in the more inner apartments of the extensive

building, under the immediate eye of a grim old nun, or, as the conventual rule designed her, an ancient, sad, and virtuous person, termed Mistress of the Novices, were not permitted to pollute their eyes by looking on waving plumes and rustling mantles. A few sisters, indeed, of the abbess's own standing were left at liberty, being such goods as it was thought could not, in shopman's phrase, take harm from the air, and which are therefore left lying loose on the counter. These antiquated dames went mumping about with much affected indifference, and a great deal of real curiosity, endeavouring indirectly to get information concerning names, and dresses, and decorations, without daring to show such interest in these vanities as actual questions on the subject might have implied.

A stout band of the Constable's spearmen guarded the gate of the nunnery, admitting within the hallowed precinct the few only who were to be present at the solemnity, with their principal attendants; and while the former were ushered with all due ceremony into the apartments dressed out for the occasion, the attendants, although detained in the outer court, were liberally supplied with refreshments of the most substantial kind; and had the amusement, so dear to the menial classes, of examining and criticising their masters and mistresses, as they passed into the interior apartments prepared for their reception.

Amongst the domestics who were thus employed were old Raoul the huntsman and his jolly dame: he, gay and glorious, in a new cassock of green velvet, she, gracious and comely, in a kirtle of yellow silk, fringed with minivair, and that at no mean cost, were equally busied in beholding the gay spectacle. The most inveterate wars have their occasional terms of truce, the most bitter and boisterous weather its hours of warmth and of calmness; and so was it with the matrimonial horizon of this amiable pair, which, usually cloudy, had now for brief space cleared up. The splendour of their new apparel, the mirth of the spectacle around them, with the aid, perhaps, of a bowl of muscadine quaffed by Raoul, and a cup of hippocras sipped by his wife, had rendered them rather more agreeable in each other's eyes than was their wont; good cheer being in such cases, as oil is to a rusty lock, the means of making those valves move smoothly and glibly which otherwise work not together at all, or by shrieks and groans express their reluctance to move in union. The pair had stuck themselves into a kind of niche, three or four steps from the ground, which contained a small

stone bench, whence their curious eyes could scrutinise with advantage every guest who entered the court

Thus placed, and in their present state of temporary concord, Raoul with his frosty visage formed no unapt representative of January, the bitter father of the year; and though Gillian was past the delicate bloom of youthful May, yet the melting fire of a full black eye, and the genial glow of a ripe and crimson cheek, made her a lively type of the fruitful and jovial August. Dame Gillian used to make it her boast, that she could please everybody with her gossip, when she chose it, from Raymond Berenger down to Robin the horse-boy; and like a good housewife, who, to keep her hand in use, will sometimes even condescend to dress a dish for her husband's sole eating, she now thought proper to practise her powers of pleasing on old Raoul, fairly conquering, in her successful sallies of mirth and satire, not only his cynical temperament towards all human kind, but his peculiar and special disposition to be testy with his spouse. Her jokes, such as they were, and the coquetry with which they were enforced, had such an effect on this Timon of the woods, that he curled up his cynical nose, displayed his few straggling teeth like a cur about to bite, broke out into a barking laugh, which was more like the cry of one of his own hounds, stopped short in the explosion, as if he had suddenly recollected that it was out of character; yet, ere he resumed his acrimonious gravity, shot such a glance at Gillian as made his nut-cracker jaws, pinched eyes, and convolved nose bear no small resemblance to one of those fantastic faces which decorate the upper end of old bass viols.

'Is not this better than laying your dog-leash on your loving wife, as if she were a brach of the kennel?' said August to January.

'In troth is it,' answered January, in a frost-bitten tone; 'and so it is also better than doing the brach-tricks which bring the leash into exercise.'

'Humph!' said Gillian, in the tone of one who thought her husband's proposition might bear being disputed; but instantly changing the note to that of tender complaint, 'Ah! Raoul,' she said, 'do you not remember how you once beat me because our late lord — Our Lady assoilzie him! — took my crimson breast-knot for a peony rose?'

'Ay — ay,' said the huntsman; 'I remember our old master would make such mistakes — Our Lady assoilzie him! as you say: the best hound will hunt counter.'

'And how could you think, dearest Raoul, to let the wife of thy bosom go so long without a new kirtle?' said his helpmate.

'Why, thou hast got one from our young lady that might serve a countess,' said Raoul, his concord jarred by her touching this chord; 'how many kirtles wouldst thou have?'

'Only two, kind Raoul, just that folk may not count their children's age by the date of Dame Gillian's last new gown.'

'Well — well, it is hard that a man cannot be in good-humour once and away without being made to pay for it. But thou shalt have a new kirtle at Michaelmas, when I sell the bucks' hides for the season. The very antlers should bring a good penny this year.'

'Ay — ay,' said Gillian; 'I ever tell thee, husband, the horns would be worth the hide in a fair market.'

Raoul turned briskly round as if a wasp had stung him, and there is no guessing what his reply might have been to this seemingly innocent observation, had not a gallant horseman at that instant entered the court, and, dismounting like the others, gave his horse to the charge of a squire, or equerry, whose attire blazed with embroidery.

'By St. Hubert, a proper horseman, and a *destrier* for an earl,' said Raoul, 'and my Lord Constable's liveries withal; yet I know not the gallant.'

'But I do,' said Gillian; 'it is Randal de Lacy, the Constable's kinsman, and as good a man as ever came of the name.'

'Oh! by St. Hubert, I have heard of him; men say he is a reveller, and a jangler, and a waster of his goods.'

'Men lie now and then,' said Gillian, drily.

'And women also,' replied Raoul; 'why, methinks he winked on thee just now.'

'That right eye of thine saw never true since our good lord — St. Mary rest him! — flung a cup of wine in thy face for pressing over boldly into his withdrawing-room.'

'I marvel,' said Raoul, as if he heard her not, 'that yonder ruffler comes hither. I have heard that he is suspected to have attempted the Constable's life, and that they have not spoken together for five years.'

'He comes on my young lady's invitation, and that I know full well,' said Dame Gillian; 'and he is less like to do the Constable wrong than to have wrong at his hand, poor gentleman, as indeed he has had enough of that already.'

'And who told thee so?' said Raoul, bitterly.

'No matter, it was one who knew all about it very well,' said the dame, who began to fear that, in displaying her triumph of superior information, she had been rather over-communicative.

'It must have been the devil, or Randal himself,' said Raoul, 'for no other mouth is large enough for such a lie. But harkye, Dame Gillian, who is he that presses forward next, like a man that scarce sees how he goes?'

'Even your angel of grace, my young Squire Damian,' said Dame Gillian.

'It is impossible!' answered Raoul. 'Call me blind if thou wilt, but I have never seen man so changed in a few weeks; and his attire is flung on him so wildly as if he wore a horse-cloth round him instead of a mantle. What can ail the youth? He has made a dead pause at the door, as if he saw something on the threshold that debarred his entrance. St. Hubert, but he looks as if he were elf-stricken!'

'You ever thought him such a treasure!' said Gillian; 'and now look at him as he stands by the side of a real gentleman, how he stares and trembles as if he were distraught.'

'I will speak to him,' said Raoul, forgetting his lameness, and springing from his elevated station — 'I will speak to him; and, if he be unwell, I have my lancets and fleams to bleed man as well as brute.'

'And a fit physician for such a patient,' muttered Gillian — 'a dog-leech for a dreamy madman, that neither knows his own disease nor the way to cure it.'

Meanwhile the old huntsman made his way towards the entrance, before which Damian remained standing, in apparent uncertainty whether he should enter or not regardless of the crowd around, and at the same time attracting their attention by the singularity of his deportment.

Raoul had a private regard for Damian; for which, perhaps, it was a chief reason that of late his wife had been in the habit of speaking of him in a tone more disrespectful than she usually applied to handsome young men. Besides, he understood the youth was a second Sir Tristrem in silvan sports by wood and river, and there needed no more to fetter Raoul's soul to him with bands of steel. He saw with great concern his conduct attract general notice, mixed with some ridicule.

'He stands,' said the town-jester, who had crowded into the gay throng, 'before the gate like Balaam's ass in the mystery,

when the animal sees so much more than can be seen by any one else.'

A cut from Raoul's ready leash rewarded the felicity of this application, and sent the fool howling off to seek a more favourable audience for his pleasantry. At the same time Raoul pressed up to Damian, and, with an earnestness very different from his usual dry causticity of manner, begged him for God's sake not to make himself the general spectacle, by standing there as if the devil sat on the doorway, but either to enter, or, what might be as becoming, to retire, and make himself more fit in apparel for attending on a solemnity so nearly concerning his house.

'And what ails my apparel, old man?' said Damian, turning sternly on the huntsman, as one who has been hastily and uncivilly roused from a reverie.

'Only, with respect to your valour,' answered the huntsman, 'men do not usually put old mantles over new doublets; and methinks, with submission, that of yours neither accords with your dress nor is fitted for this noble presence.'

'Thou art a fool!' answered Damian, 'and as green in wit as grey in years. Know you not that in these days the young and old consort together — contract together — wed together? and should we take more care to make our apparel consistent than our actions?'

'For God's sake, my lord,' said Raoul, 'forbear these wild and dangerous words! they may be heard by other ears than mine, and construed by worse interpreters. There may be here those who will pretend to track mischief from light words, as I would find a buck from his frayings. Your cheek is pale, my lord, your eye is bloodshot; for Heaven's sake, retire.'

'I will not retire,' said Damian, with yet more distemperature of manner, 'till I have seen the Lady Eveline.'

'For the sake of all the saints,' ejaculated Raoul, 'not now! You will do my lady incredible injury by forcing yourself into her presence in this condition.'

'Do you think so?' said Damian, the remark seeming to operate as a sedative which enabled him to collect his scattered thoughts. 'Do you really think so? I thought that to have looked upon her once more — but no, you are in the right, old man.'

He turned from the door as if to withdraw, but ere he could accomplish his purpose, he turned yet more pale than before, staggered, and fell on the pavement ere Raoul could afford him

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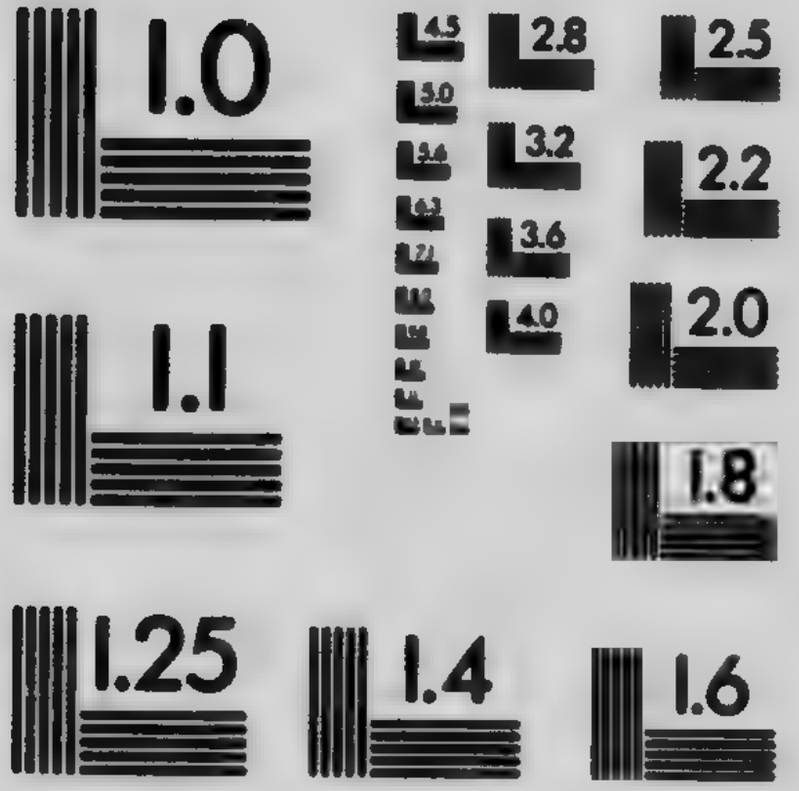

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his support, useless as that might have proved. Those who raised him were surprised to observe that his garments were soiled with blood, and that the stains upon his cloak, which had been criticised by Raoul, were of the same complexion. A grave-looking personage, wrapped in a sad-coloured mantle, came forth from the crowd.

'I knew how it would be,' he said; 'I made venesection this morning, and commanded repose and sleep according to the aphorisms of Hippocrates; but if young gentlemen will neglect the ordinance of their physician, medicine will avenge herself. It is impossible that my bandage or ligature, knit by these fingers, should have started, but to avenge the neglect of the precepts of art.'

'What means this prate?' said the voice of the Constable, before which all others were silent. He had been summoned forth just as the rite of espousal or betrothing was concluded, on the confusion occasioned by Damian's situation, and now sternly commanded the physician to replace the bandages which had slipped from his nephew's arm, himself assisting in the task of supporting the patient, with the anxious and deeply agitated feelings of one who saw a near and justly valued relative — as yet the heir of his fame and family — stretched before him in a condition so dangerous.

But the griefs of the powerful and the fortunate are often mingled with the impatience of interrupted prosperity. 'What means this?' he demanded sternly of the leech. 'I sent you this morning to attend my nephew on the first tidings of his illness, and commanded that he should make no attempt to be present on this day's solemnity, yet I find him in this state and in this place.'

'So please your lordship,' replied the leech, with a conscious self-importance which even the presence of the Constable could not subdue, '*Curatio est canonica, non coacta;* which signifieth, my lord, that the physician acteth his cure by rules of art and science, by advice and prescription, but not by force or violence upon the patient, who cannot be at all benefited unless he be voluntarily amenable to the orders of his medicum.'

'Tell me not of your jargon,' said De Lacy; 'if my nephew was light-headed enough to attempt to come hither in the heat of a delirious distemper, you should have had sense to prevent him, had it been by actual force.'

'It may be,' said Randal de Lacy, joining the crowd, who, forgetting the cause which had brought them together, were

now assembled about Damian, 'that more powerful was the magnet which drew our kinsman hither than aught the leech could do to withhold him.'

The Constable, still busied about his nephew, looked up as Randal spoke, and, when he was done, asked, with formal coldness of manner, 'Ha, fair kinsman, of what magnet do you speak?'

'Surely of your nephew's love and regard to your lordship,' answered Randal, 'which, not to mention his respect for the Lady Eveline, must have compelled him hither, if his limbs were able to bear him. And here the bride comes, I think, in charity, to thank him for his zeal.'

'What unhappy case is this?' said the Lady Eveline, pressing forward, much disordered with the intelligence of Damian's danger, which had been suddenly conveyed to her. 'Is there nothing in which my poor service may avail?'

'Nothing, lady,' said the Constable, rising from beside his nephew, and taking her hand; 'your kindness is here mistimed. This motley assembly, this unseeming confusion, become not your presence.'

'Unless it could be helpful, my lord,' said Eveline, eagerly. 'It is your nephew who is in danger — my deliverer — one of my deliverers, I would say.'

'He is fitly attended by his chirurgeon,' said the Constable, leading back his reluctant bride into the convent; while the medical attendant triumphantly exclaimed —

'Well judgeth my Lord Constable, to withdraw his noble lady from the host of petticoated empirics, who, like so many Amazons, break in upon and derange the regular course of physical practice, with their petulant prognostics, their rash recipes, their mithridate, their febrifuges, their amulets, and their charms. Well speaketh the ethnic poet,

> Non audet, nisi quæ [qui] didicit, dare: quod medicorum est
> Promittunt medici: tractant fabrilia fabri.'

As he repeated these lines with much emphasis, the doctor permitted his patient's arm to drop from his hand, that he might aid the cadence with a flourish of his own. 'There,' said he to the spectators, 'is what none of you understand — no, by St. Luke, nor the Constable himself.'

'But he knows how to whip in a hound that babbles when he should be busy,' said Raoul; and, silenced by this hint, the chirurgeon betook himself to his proper duty of superintending the removal of young Damian to an apartment in the neighbour-

ing street, where the symptoms of his disorder seemed rather to increase than diminish, and speedily required all the skill and attention which the leech could bestow.

The subscription of the contract of marriage had, as already noticed, been just concluded, when the company assembled on the occasion were interrupted by the news of Damian's illness. When the Constable led his bride from the courtyard into the apartment where the company was assembled, there was discomposure and uneasiness on the countenance of both; and it was not a little increased by the bride pulling her hand hastily from the hold of the bridegroom, on observing that the latter was stained with recent blood, and had in truth left the same stamp upon her own. With a faint exclamation she showed the marks to Rose, saying at the same time, 'What bodes this? Is this the revenge of the Bloody-Finger already commencing?'

'It bodes nothing, my dearest lady,' said Rose; 'it is our own fears that are prophets, not those trifles which we take for augury. For God's sake, speak to my lord! He is surprised at your agitation.'

'Let him ask me the cause himself,' said Eveline; 'fitter it should be told at his bidding than be offered by me unasked.'

The Constable, while his bride stood thus conversing with her maiden, had also observed that, in his anxiety to assist his nephew, he had transferred part of his blood from his own hands to Eveline's dress. He came forward to apologise for what at such a moment seemed almost ominous. 'Fair lady,' said he, 'the blood of a true De Lacy can never bode aught but peace and happiness to you.'

Eveline seemed as if she would have answered, but could not immediately find words. The faithful Rose, at the risk of incurring the censure of being over-forward, hastened to reply to the compliment. 'Every damsel is bound to believe what you say, my noble lord,' was her answer, 'knowing how readily that blood hath ever flowed for protecting the distressed, and so lately for our own relief.'

'It is well spoken, little one,' answered the Constable; 'and the Lady Eveline is happy in a maiden who so well knows how to speak when it is her own pleasure to be silent. Come, lady,' he added, 'let us hope this mishap of my kinsman is but like a sacrifice to fortune, which permits not the brightest hour to pass without some intervening shr Damian, I trust, will speedily recover; and be we mindful ..at the blood-drops which alarm you have been drawn by a friendly steel, and are symptoms

rather of recovery than of illness. Come, dearest lady, your silence discourages our friends, and wakes in them doubts whether we be sincere in the welcome due to them. Let me be your sewer,' he said; and, taking a silver ewer and napkin from the standing cupboard, which was loaded with plate, he presented them on his knee to his bride.

Exerting herself to shake off the alarm into which she had been thrown by some supposed coincidence of the present accident with the apparition of Baldringham, Eveline, entering into her betrothed husband's humour, was about to raise him from the ground, when he was interrupted by the arrival of a hasty messenger, who, coming into the room without ceremony, informed the Constable that his nephew was so extremely ill, that, if he hoped to see him alive, it would be necessary he should come to his lodgings instantly.

The Constable started up, made a brief adieu to Eveline and to the guests, who, dismayed at this new and disastrous intelligence, were preparing to disperse themselves, when, as he advanced towards the door, he was met by a paritor, or summoner of the ecclesiastical court, whose official dress had procured him unobstructed entrance into the precincts of the abbey.

'*Deus vobiscum*,' said the paritor; 'I would know which of this fair company is the Constable of Chester?'

'I am he,' answered the elder De Lacy; 'but if thy business be not the more hasty, I cannot now speak with thee: I am bound on matters of life and death.'

'I take all Christian people to witness that I have discharged my duty,' said the paritor, putting into the hand of the Constable a slip of parchment.

'How is this, fellow?' said the Constable, in great indignation: 'for whom or what does your master the Archbishop take me, that he deals with me in this uncourteous fashion, citing me to compear before him more like a delinquent than a friend or a nobleman?'

'My gracious lord,' answered the paritor, haughtily, 'is accountable to no one but our Holy Father the Pope for the exercise of the power which is entrusted to him by the canons of the church. Your lordship's answer to my citation?'

'Is the Archbishop present in this city?' said the Constable, after a moment's reflection. 'I knew not of his purpose to travel hither, still less of his purpose to exercise authority within these bounds.'

'My gracious lord the Archbishop,' said the paritor, 'is but now arrived in this city, of which he is metropolitan; and, besides, by his apostolical commission, a legate *a latere* hath plenary jurisdiction throughout all England, as those may find, whatsoever be their degree, who may dare to disobey his summons.'

'Hark thee, fellow,' said the Constable, regarding the paritor with a grim and angry countenance, 'were it not for certain respects, which I promise thee thy tawny hood hath little to do with, thou wert better have swallowed thy citation, seal and all, than delivered it to me with the addition of such saucy terms. Go hence, and tell your master I will see him within the space of an hour, during which time I am delayed by the necessity of attending a sick relation.'

The paritor left the apartment with more humility in his manner than when he had entered, and left the assembled guests to look upon each other in silence and dismay.

The reader cannot fail to remember how severely the yoke of the Roman supremacy pressed both on the clergy and laity of England during the reign of Henry II. Even the attempt of that wise and courageous monarch to make a stand for the independence of his throne in the memorable case of Thomas a Becket had such an unhappy issue that, like a suppressed rebellion, it was found to add new strength to the domination of the church. Since the submission of the king in that ill-fated struggle, the voice of Rome had double potency whenever it was heard, and the boldest peers of England held it more wise to submit to her imperious dictates than to provoke a spiritual censure which had so many secular consequences. Hence the slight and scornful manner in which the Constable was treated by the prelate Baldwin struck a chill of astonishment into the assembly of friends whom he had collected to witness his espousals; and as he glanced his haughty eye around, he saw that many who would have stood by him through life and death in any other quarrel, had it even been with his sovereign, were turning pale at the very thought of a collision with the church. Embarrassed, and at the same time incensed at their timidity, the Constable hasted to dismiss them, with the general assurance that all would be well; that his nephew's indisposition was a trifling complaint, exaggerated by a conceited physician and by his own want of care; and that the message of the Archbishop, so unceremoniously delivered, was but the consequence of their mutual and friendly

familiarity, which induced them sometimes, for the jest's sake, to reverse or neglect the ordinary forms of intercourse. 'If I wanted to speak with the prelate Baldwin on express business and in haste, such is the humility and indifference to form of that worthy pillar of the church, that I should not fear offence,' said the Constable, 'did I send the meanest horse-boy in my troop to ask an audience of him.'

So he spoke, but there was something in his countenance which contradicted his words; and his friends and relations retired from the splendid and joyful ceremony of his espousals as from a funeral feast, with anxious thoughts and with downcast eyes.

Randal was the only person who, having attentively watched the whole progress of the affair during the evening, ventured to approach his cousin as he left the house, and asked him, 'In the name of their reunited friendship, whether he had nothing to command him?' assuring him, with a look more expressive than his words, that he would not find him cold in his service.

'I have nought which can exercise your zeal, fair cousin,' replied the Constable, with the air of one who partly questioned the speaker's sincerity; and the parting reverence with which he accompanied his words left Randal no pretext for continuing his attendance, as he seemed to have designed.

CHAPTER XVIII

Oh, were I seated high as my ambition,
I 'd place this naked foot on necks of monarchs !

Mysterious Mother.

THE most anxious and unhappy moment of Hugo de Lacy's life was unquestionably that in which, by espousing Eveline with all civil and religious solemnity, he seemed to approach to what for some time he had considered as the prime object of his wishes. He was assured of the early possession of a beautiful and amiable wife, endowed with such advantage of worldly goods as gratified his ambition as well as his affections. Yet, even in this fortunate moment, the horizon darkened around him in a manner which presaged nought but storm and calamity. At his nephew's lodging he learned that the pulse of the patient had risen, and his delirium had augmented, and all around him spoke very doubtfully of his chance of recovery, or surviving a crisis which seemed speedily approaching. The Constable stole towards the door of the apartment which his feelings permitted him not to enter, and listened to the raving which the fever gave rise to. Nothing can be more melancholy than to hear the mind at work concerning its ordinary occupations when the body is stretched in pain and danger upon the couch of sickness : the contrast betwixt the ordinary state of health and its labours, renders doubly affecting the actual wildness of the patient before whom these visions are passing, and we feel a corresponding degree of compassion for the sufferer whose thoughts are wandering so far from his real condition.

The Constable felt this acutely, as he heard his nephew shout the war-cry of the family repeatedly, appearing, by the words of command and direction which he uttered from time to time, to be actively engaged in leading his men-at-arms against the Welsh. At another time he muttered various terms of the *manege*, of falconry, and of the chase ; he men-

tioned his uncle's name repeatedly on these occasions, as if the idea of his kinsman had been connected alike with his martial encounters and with his sports by wood and river. Other sounds there were, which he muttered so low as to be altogether undistinguishable.

With a heart even still more softened towards his kinsman's sufferings from hearing the points on which his mind wandered, the Constable twice applied his hand to the latch of the door, in order to enter the bedroom, and twice forbore, his eyes running faster with tears than he chose should be witnessed by the attendants. At length, relinquishing his purpose, he hastily left the house, mounted his horse, and, followed only by four of his personal attendants, rode towards the palace of the bishop, where, as he learned from public rumour, the arch-prelate Baldwin had taken up his temporary residence.

The train of riders and of led horses, of sumpter-mules, and of menials and attendants, both lay and ecclesiastical, which thronged around the gate of the episcopal mansion, together with the gaping crowd of inhabitants who had gathered around, some to gaze upon the splendid show, some to have the chance of receiving the benediction of the holy prelate, was so great as to impede the Constable's approach to the palace door; and when this obstacle was surmounted, he found another in the obstinacy of the Archbishop's attendants, who permitted him not, though announced by name and title, to cross the threshold of the mansion until they should receive the express command of their master to that effect.

The Constable felt the full effect of this slighting reception. He had dismounted from his horse in full confidence of being instantly admitted into the palace at least, if not into the prelate's presence; and as he now stood on foot among the squires, grooms, and horse-boys of the spiritual lord, he was so much disgusted, that his first impulse was to remount his horse and return to his pavilion, pitched for the time before the city walls, leaving it to the bishop to seek him there, if he really desired an interview. But the necessity of conciliation almost immediately rushed on his mind, and subdued the first haughty impulse of his offended pride. 'If our wise king,' he said to himself, 'hath held the stirrup of one prelate of Canterbury when living, and submitted to the most degrading observances before his shrine when dead, surely I need not be more scrupulous towards his priestly successor in the same overgrown authority.' Another thought, which he dared hardly to

acknowledge, recommended the same humble and submissive course. He could not but feel that, in endeavouring to evade his vows as a crusader, he was incurring some just censure from the church; and he was not unwilling to hope that his present cold and scornful reception on Baldwin's part might be meant as a part of the penance which his conscience informed him his conduct was about to receive.

After a short interval, De Lacy was at length invited to enter the palace of the Bishop of Gloucester, in which he was to meet the Primate of England; but there was more than one brief pause, in hall and ante-room, ere he at length was admitted to Baldwin's presence.

The successor of the celebrated Becket had neither the extensive views nor the aspiring spirit of that redoubted personage; but, on the other hand, saint as the latter had become, it may be questioned whether, in his professions for the weal of Christendom, he was half so sincere as was the present archbishop. Baldwin was, in truth, a man well qualified to defend the powers which the church had gained, though perhaps of a character too sincere and candid to be active in extending them. The advancement of the Crusade was the chief business of his life, his success the principal cause of his pride; and if the sense of possessing the powers of eloquent persuasion, and skill to bend the minds of men to his purpose, was blended with his religious zeal, still the tenor of his life, and afterwards his death before Ptolemais, showed that the liberation of the Holy Sepulchre from the infidels was the unfeigned object of all his exertions. Hugo de Lacy well knew this; and the difficulty of managing such a temper appeared much greater to him on the eve of the interview in which the attempt was to be made than he had suffered himself to suppose when the crisis was yet distant.

The prelate, a man of a handsome and stately form, with features rather too severe to be pleasing, received the Constable in all the pomp of ecclesiastical dignity. He was seated on a chair of oak, richly carved with Gothic ornaments, and placed above the rest of the floor under a niche of the same workmanship. His dress was the rich episcopal robe, ornamented with costly embroidery, and fringed around the neck and cuffs; it opened from the throat and in the middle, and showed an under vestment of embroidery, betwixt the folds of which, as if imperfectly concealed, peeped the close shirt of haircloth which the prelate constantly wore under all his pompous attire. His

mitre was placed beside him on an oaken table of the same workmanship with his throne, against which also rested his pastoral staff, representing a shepherd's crook of the simplest form, yet which had proved more powerful and fearful than lance or scimitar, when wielded by the hand of Thomas a Becket.

A chaplain in a white surplice kneeled at a little distance before a desk, and read forth from an illuminated volume some portion of a theological treatise, in which Baldwin appeared so deeply interested that he did not seem to notice the entrance of the Constable, who, highly displeased at this additional slight, stood on the floor of the hall, undetermined whether to interrupt the reader and address the prelate at once, or to withdraw without saluting him at all. Ere he had formed a resolution, the chaplain had arrived at some convenient pause in the lecture, where the Archbishop stopped him with '*Satis est, mi fili.*'

It was in vain that the proud secular baron strove to conceal the embarrassment with which he approached the prelate, whose attitude was plainly assumed for the purpose of impressing him with awe and solicitude. He tried, indeed, to exhibit a demeanour of such ease as might characterise their old friendship, or at least of such indifference as might infer the possession of perfect tranquillity; but he failed in both, and his address expressed mortified pride, mixed with no ordinary degree of embarrassment. The genius of the Catholic Church was on such occasions sure to predominate over the haughtiest of the laity.

'I perceive,' said De Lacy, collecting his thoughts, and ashamed to find he had difficulty in doing so — 'I perceive that an old friendship is here dissolved. Methinks Hugo de Lacy might have expected another messenger to summon him to this reverend presence, and that another welcome should wait him on his arrival.'

The Archbishop raised himself slowly in his seat, and made a half-inclination towards the Constable, who, by an instinctive desire of conciliation, returned it lower than he had intended or than the scanty courtesy merited. The prelate at the same time signing to his chaplain, the latter arose to withdraw, and receiving permission in the phrase '*Do veniam*,' retreated reverentially, without either turning his back or looking upward, his eyes fixed on the ground, his hands still folded in his habit and crossed over his bosom.

When this mute attendant had disappeared, the prelate's brow became more open, yet retained a dark shade of grave displeasure, and he replied to the address of De Lacy, but still without rising from his seat. 'It skills not now, my lord, to say what the brave Constable of Chester has been to the poor priest Baldwin, or with what love and pride we beheld him assume the holy sign of salvation, and, to honour Him by whom he has himself been raised to honour, vow himself to the deliverance of the Holy Land. If I still see that noble lord before me in the same holy resolution, let me know the joyful truth, and I will lay aside rochet and mitre, and tend his horse like a groom, if it be necessary by such menial service to show the cordial respect I bear to him.'

'Reverend father,' answered De Lacy, with hesitation, 'I had hoped that the propositions which were made to you on my part by the Dean of Hereford might have seemed more satisfactory in your eyes.' Then regaining his native confidence, he proceeded with more assurance in speech and manner, for the cold, inflexible looks of the Archbishop irritated him, 'If these proposals can be amended, my lord, let me know in what points, and, if possible, your pleasure shall be done, even if it should prove somewhat unreasonable. I would have peace, my lord, with Holy Church, and am the last who would despise her mandates. This has been known by my deeds in field and counsels in the state; nor can I think my services have merited cold looks and cold language from the Primate of England.'

'Do you upbraid the church with your services, vain man?' said Baldwin. 'I tell thee, Hugo de Lacy, that what Heaven hath wrought for the church by thy hand could, had it been the divine pleasure, have been achieved with as much ease by the meanest horse-boy in thy host. It is *thou* that art honoured, in being the chosen instrument by which great things have been wrought in Israel. Nay, interrupt me not. I tell thee, proud baron, that, in the sight of Heaven, thy wisdom is but as folly, thy courage, which thou dost boast, but the cowardice of a village maiden, thy strength weakness, thy spear an osier, and thy sword a bulrush.'

'All this I know, good father,' said the Constable, 'and have ever heard it repeated when such poor services as I may have rendered are gone and past. Marry, when there was need for my helping hand, I was the very good lord of priest and prelate, and one who should be honoured and prayed for with patrons and founders who sleep in the choir and under the high

altar. There was no thought, I trow, of osier or of bulrush, when I have been prayed to couch my lance or draw my weapon; it is only when they are needless that they and their owner are undervalued. Well, my reverend father, be it so; if the church can cast the Saracens from the Holy Land by grooms and horse-boys, wherefore do you preach to us and nobles from the homes and the countries which they are born to protect and defend?'

The Archbishop looked steadily on him as he replied, 'Not for the sake of their fleshly arm do we disturb your knights and barons in their prosecution of barbarous festivities and murderous feuds, which you call enjoying their homes and protecting their domains — not that Omnipotence requires their arm of flesh to execute the great predestined work of liberation, but for the weal of their immortal souls.' These last words he pronounced with great emphasis.

The Constable paced the floor impatiently, and muttered to himself, 'Such is the airy guerdon for which hosts on hosts have been drawn from Europe to drench the sands of Palestine with their gore; such the vain promises for which we are called upon to barter our country, our lands, and our lives!'

'Is it Hugo de Lacy speaks thus?' said the Archbishop, arising from his seat, and qualifying his tone of censure with the appearance of shame and of regret. 'Is it he who underprizes the renown of a knight, the virtue of a Christian, the advancement of his earthly honour, the more incalculable profit of his immortal soul? Is it he who desires a solid and substantial recompense in lands or treasure, to be won by warring on his less powerful neighbours at home, while knightly honour and religious faith, his vow as a knight and his baptism as a Christian, call him to a more glorious and more dangerous strife? Can it be indeed Hugo de Lacy, the mirror of the Anglo-Norman chivalry, whose thoughts can conceive such sentiments, whose words can utter them?'

'Flattery and fair speech, suitably mixed with taunts and reproaches, my lord,' answered the Constable, colouring and biting his lip, 'may carry your point with others; but I am of a temper too solid to be either wheedled or goaded into measures of importance. Forbear, therefore, this strain of affected amazement; and believe me, that, whether he goes to the Crusade or abides at home, the character of Hugo Lacy will remain as unimpeached in point of courage as that of the Archbishop Baldwin in point of sanctitude.'

'May it stand much higher,' said the Archbishop, 'than the reputation with which you vouchsafe to compare it! But a blaze may be extinguished as well as a spark; and I tell the Constable of Chester, that the fame which has sat on his basnet for so many years may flit from it in one moment, never to be recalled.'

'Who dares to say so?' said the Constable, tremblingly alive to the honour for which he had encountered so many dangers.

'A friend,' said the Prelate, 'whose stripes should be received as benefits. You think of pay, sir Constable, and of guerdon, as if you still stood in the market, free to chaffer on the terms of your service. I tell you, you are no longer your own master: you are, by the blessed badge you have voluntarily assumed, the soldier of God Himself; nor can you fly from your standard without such infamy as even coistrels or grooms are unwilling to incur.'

'You deal all too hardly with us, my lord,' said Hugo de Lacy, stopping short in his troubled walk. 'You of the spirituality make us laymen the packhorses of your own concerns, and climb to ambitious heights by the help of our overburdened shoulders. But all hath its limits; Becket transgressed it, and ——'

A gloomy and expressive look corresponded with the tone in which he spoke this broken sentence; and the prelate, at no loss to comprehend his meaning, replied, in a firm and determined voice, 'And he was *murdered!* that is what you dare to hint to me — even to me, the successor of that glorified saint — as a motive for complying with your fickle and selfish wish to withdraw your hand from the plough. You know not to whom you address such a threat. True, Becket, from a saint militant on earth, arrived, by the bloody path of martyrdom, to the dignity of a saint in Heaven; and no less true is it that, to attain a seat a thousand degrees beneath that of his blessed predecessor, the unworthy Baldwin were willing to submit, under Our Lady's protection, to whatever the worst of wicked men can inflict on his earthly frame.'

'There needs not this show of courage, reverend father,' said De Lacy, recollecting himself, 'where there neither is nor can be danger. I pray you, let us debate this matter more deliberately. I have never meant to break off my purpose for the Holy Land, but only to postpone it. Methinks the offers that I have made are fair, and ought to obtain for me what

has been granted to others in the like case — a slight delay in the time of my departure.'

'A slight delay on the part of such a leader as you, noble De Lacy,' answered the prelate, 'were a death-blow to our holy and most gallant enterprise. To meaner men we might have granted the privilege of marrying and giving in marriage, even although they care not for the sorrows of Jacob; but you, my lord, are a main prop of our enterprise, and, being withdrawn, the whole fabric may fall to the ground. Who in England will deem himself obliged to press forward, when Hugo de Lacy falls back? Think, my lord, less upon your plighted bride, and more on your plighted word; and believe not that a union can ever come to good which shakes your purpose towards our blessed undertaking for the honour of Christendom.'

The Constable was embarrassed by the pertinacity of the prelate, and began to give way to his arguments, though most reluctantly, and only because the habits and opinions of the time left him no means of combating his arguments otherwise than by solicitation. 'I admit,' he said, 'my engagements for the Crusade, nor have I — I repeat it — further desire than that brief interval which may be necessary to place my important affairs in order. Meanwhile, my vassals led by my nephew ——'

'Promise that which is within thy power,' said the prelate. 'Who knows whether, in resentment of thy seeking after other things than His most holy cause, thy nephew may not be called hence, even while we speak together?'

'God forbid!' said the baron, starting up, as if about to fly to his nephew's assistance; then suddenly pausing, he turned on the prelate a keen and investigating glance. 'It is not well,' he said, 'that your reverence should thus trifle with the dangers which threaten my house. Damian is dear to me for his own good qualities — dear for the sake of my only brother. May God forgive us both! he died when we were in unkindness with each other. My lord, your words import that my beloved nephew suffers pain and incurs danger on account of my offences?'

The Archbishop perceived he had at length touched the chord to which his refractory penitent's heart-strings must needs vibrate. He replied with circumspection, as well knowing with whom he had to deal — 'Far be it from me to presume to interpret the councils of Heaven! but we read in Scripture,

that when the fathers eat sour grapes, the teeth of the children are set on edge. What so reasonable as that we should be punished for our pride and contumacy, by a judgment specially calculated to abate and bend that spirit of surquedry? You yourself best know if this disease clung to thy nephew before you had meditated defection from the banner of the Cross.'

Hugo de Lacy hastily recollected himself, and found that it was indeed true that, until he thought of his union with Eveline, there had appeared no change in his nephew's health. His silence and confusion did not escape the artful prelate. He took the hand of the warrior, as he stood before him overwhelmed in doubt, lest his preference of the continuance of his own house to the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre should have been punished by the disease which threatened his nephew's life. 'Come,' he said, 'noble De Lacy, the judgment provoked by a moment's presumption may be even yet averted by prayer and penitence. The dial went back at the prayer of the good King Hezekiah; down — down upon thy knees, and doubt not that, with confession, and penance, and absolution, thou mayst yet atone for thy falling away from the cause of Heaven.'

Borne down by the dictates of the religion in which he had been educated, and by the fears lest his delay was punished by his nephew's indisposition and danger, the Constable sunk on his knees before the prelate, whom he had shortly before well-nigh braved, confessed, as a sin to be deeply repented of, his purpose of delaying his departure for Palestine, and received, with patience at least, if not with willing acquiescence, the penance inflicted by the Archbishop, which consisted in a prohibition to proceed farther in his proposed wedlock with the Lady Eveline, until he was returned from Palestine, where he was bound by his vow to abide for the term of three years.

'And now, noble De Lacy,' said the prelate, 'once more my best beloved and most honoured friend, is not thy bosom lighter since thou hast thus nobly acquitted thee of thy debt to Heaven, and cleansed thy gallant spirit from those selfish and earthly stains which dimmed its brightness?'

The Constable sighed. 'My happiest thoughts at this moment,' he said, 'would arise from knowledge that my nephew's health is amended.'

'Be not discomforted on the score of the noble Damian, your hopeful and valorous kinsman,' said the Archbishop, 'for well I trust shortly ye shall hear of his recovery: or that, if it

shall please God to remove him to a better world, the passage shall be so easy, and his arrival in yonder haven of bliss so speedy, that it were better for him to have died than to have lived.'

The Constable looked at him, as if to gather from his countenance more certainty of his nephew's fate than his words seemed to imply; and the prelate, to escape being farther pressed on a subject on which he was perhaps conscious he had adventured too far, rung a silver bell which stood before him on the table, and commanded the chaplain who entered at the summons that he should despatch a careful messenger to the lodging of Damian Lacy, to bring particular accounts of his health.

'A stranger,' answered the chaplain, 'just come from the sick-chamber of the noble Damian Lacy, waits here even now to have speech of my Lord Constable.'

'Admit him instantly,' said the Archbishop; 'my mind tells me he brings us joyful tidings. Never knew I such humble penitence, such willing resignation of natural affections and desires to the doing of Heaven's service, but it was rewarded with a guerdon either temporal or spiritual.'

As he spoke, a man singularly dressed entered the apartment. His garments, of various colours and showily disposed, were none of the newest or cleanest, neither were they altogether fitting for the presence in which he now stood.

'How now, sirrah!' said the prelate; 'when was it that jugglers and minstrels pressed into the company of such as we without permisson?'

'So please you,' said the man, 'my instant business was not with your reverend lordship, but with my lord the Constable, to whom I will hope that my good news may atone for my evil apparel.'

'Speak, sirrah, does my kinsman live?' said the Constable, eagerly.

'And is like to live, my lord,' answered the man: 'a favourable crisis, so the leeches call it, hath taken place in his disorder, and they are no longer under any apprehensions for his life.'

'Now, God be praised, that hath granted me so much mercy!' said the Constable.

'Amen — amen!' replied the Archbishop, solemnly. 'About what period did this blessed change take place?'

'Scarcely a quarter of an hour since,' said the messenger, 'a soft sleep fell on the sick youth, like dew upon a parched

field in summer; he breathed freely, the burning heat abated, and, as I said, the leeches no longer fear for his life.'

'Marked you the hour, my Lord Constable?' said the bishop, with exultation; 'even then you stooped to those counsels which Heaven suggested through the meanest of its servants! But two words avouching penitence, but one brief prayer, and some kind saint has interceded for an instant hearing and a liberal granting of thy petition. Noble Hugo,' he continued, grasping his hand in a species of enthusiasm, 'surely Heaven designs to work high things by the hand of him whose faults are thus readily forgiven, whose prayer is thus instantly heard. For this shall *Te Deum Laudamus* be said in each church and each convent of Gloucester ere the world be a day older.'

The Constable, no less joyful, though perhaps less able to perceive an especial providence in his nephew's recovery, expressed his gratitude to the messenger of the good tidings, by throwing him his purse.

'I thank you, noble lord,' said the man; 'but if I stoop to pick up this taste of your bounty, it is only to restore it again to the donor.'

'How now, sir?' said the Constable; 'methinks thy coat seems not so well lined as needs make thee spurn at such a guerdon.'

'He that designs to catch larks, my lord,' replied the messenger, 'must not close his net upon sparrows: I have a greater boon to ask of your lordship, and therefore I decline your present gratuity.'

'A greater boon, ha!' said the Constable. 'I am no knight-errant, to bind myself by promise to grant it ere I know its import; but do thou come to my pavilion to-morrow, and thou wilt not find me unwilling to do what is reason.'

So saying, he took leave of the prelate, and returned homeward, failing not to visit his nephew's lodging as he passed, where he received the same pleasant assurances which had been communicated by the messenger of the parti-coloured mantle.

CHAPTER XIX

He was a minstrel, in his mood
Was wisdom mix'd with folly —
A tame companion to the good,
But wild and fierce among the rude,
And jovial with the jolly.

ARCHIBALD ARMSTRONG.

THE events of the preceding day had been of a nature so interesting, and latterly so harassing, that the Constable felt weary as after a severely-contested battle-field, and slept soundly until the earliest beams of dawn saluted him through the opening of the tent. It was then that, with a mingled feeling of pain and satisfaction, he began to review the change which had taken place in his condition since the preceding morning. He had then arisen an ardent bridegroom, anxious to find favour in the eyes of his fair bride, and scrupulous about his dress and appointments, as if he had been as young in years as in hopes and wishes. This was over, and he had now before him the painful task of leaving his betrothed for a term of years, even before wedlock had united them indissolubly, and of reflecting that she was exposed to all the dangers which assail female constancy in a situation thus critical. When the immediate anxiety for his nephew was removed, he was tempted to think that he had been something hasty in listening to the arguments of the Archbishop, and in believing that Damian's death or recovery depended upon his own accomplishing, to the letter, and without delay, his vow for the Holy Land. 'How many princes and kings,' he thought to himself, 'have assumed the cross, and delayed or renounced it, yet lived and died in wealth and honour, without sustaining such a visitation as that with which Baldwin threatened me; and in what case or particular di[illegible]ch men deserve more indulgence than I? But the die is no[illegible]t, and it signifies little to inquire whether my obedience to the mandates of the church has saved the life of my nephew, or whether I have not fallen, as laymen

are wont to fall, whenever there is an encounter of wits betwixt them and those of the spirituality. I would to God it may prove otherwise, since, girding on my sword as Heaven's champion, I might the better expect Heaven's protection for her whom I must unhappily leave behind me.'

As these reflections passed through his mind, he heard the wardens at the entrance of his tent challenge some one whose footsteps were heard approaching it. The person stopped on their challenge, and presently after was heard the sound of a rote (a small species of lute), the strings of which were managed by means of a small wheel. After a short prelude, a manly voice, of good compass, sung verses, which, translated into modern language, might run nearly thus :

Soldier, wake ! The day is peeping,
Honour ne'er was won in sleeping,
Never when the sunbeams still
Lay unreflected on the hill :
'T is when they are glinted back
From axe and armour, spear and jack,
That they promise future story,
Many a page of deathless glory.
Shields that are the foeman's terror
Ever are the morning's mirror.

Arm and up ! The morning beam
Hath call'd the rustic to his team,
Hath call'd the falc'ner to the lake,
Hath call'd the huntsman to the brake ;
The early student ponders o'er
His dusty tomes of ancient lore.
Soldier, wake ! Thy harvest, fame ;
Thy study, conquest ; war, thy game.
Shield, that would be foeman's terror,
Still should gleam the morning's mirror.

Poor hire repays the rustic's pain,
More paltry still the sportsman's gain,
Vainest of all, the student's theme
Ends in some metaphysic dream ;
Yet each is up, and each has toil'd
Since first the peep of dawn has smiled ;
And each is eagerer in his aim
Than he who barters life for fame.
Up, up, and arm thee, son of terror !
Be thy bright shield the morning's mirror.

When the song was finished, the Constable heard some talking without, and presently Philip Guarine entered the pavilion

to tell that a person, come hither as he said by the Constable's appointment, waited permission to speak with him.

'By my appointment?' said De Lacy. 'Admit him immediately.'

The messenger of the preceding evening entered the tent, bearing in one hand his small cap and feather, in the other the rote on which he had been just playing. His attire was fantastic, consisting of more than one inner dress of various colours, all of the brighest and richest dyes, and disposed so as to contrast with each other; the upper garment was a very short Norman cloak of bright green. An embroidered girdle sustained, in lieu of offensive weapons, an inkhorn with its appurtenances on the one side, on the other a knife for the purposes of the table. His hair was cut in imitation of the clerical tonsure, which was designed to intimate that he had arrived to a certain rank in his profession; for the joyous science, as the profession of minstrelsy was termed, had its various ranks, like the degrees in the church and in chivalry. The features and manners of the man seemed to be at variance with his profession and habit; for, as the latter was gay and fantastic, the former had a cast of gravity, and almost of sternness, which, unless when kindled by the enthusiasm of his poetical and musical exercises, seemed rather to indicate deep reflection than the thoughtless vivacity of observation which characterised most of his brethren. His countenance, though not handsome, had therefore something striking and impressive, even from its very contrast with the parti-coloured hues and fluttering shape of his vestments: and the Constable felt something inclined to patronise him, as he said, 'Good morrow, friend, and I thank thee for thy morning greeting; it was well sung and well meant, for when we call forth any one to bethink him how time passes, we do him the credit of supposing that he can employ to advantage that flitting treasure.'

The man, who had listened in silence, seemed to pause and make an effort ere he replied, 'My intentions, at least, were good, when I ventured to disturb my lord thus early; and I am glad to learn that my boldness hath not been evil received at his hand.

'True,' said the Constable, 'you had a boon to ask of me. Be speedy, and say thy request: my leisure is short.'

'It is for permission to follow you to the Holy Land, my lord,' said the man.

'Thou hast asked what I can hardly grant, my friend,' answered De Lacy. 'Thou art a minstrel, art thou not?'

'An unworthy graduate of the gay science, my lord,' said the musician; 'yet let me say for myself, that I will not yield to the king of minstrels, Geoffrey Rudel, though the king of England hath given him four manors for one song. I would be willing to contend with him in romance, lay, or fable, were the judge to be King Henry himself.'

'You have your own good word, doubtless,' said De Lacy; 'nevertheless, sir minstrel, thou goest not with me. The Crusade has been already too much encumbered by men of thy idle profession; and if thou dost add to the number, it shall not be under my protection. I am too old to be charmed by thy art, charm thou never so wisely.'

'He that is young enough to seek for and to win the love of be. ıty,' said the minstrel, but in a submissive tone, as if fearing his freedom might give offence, 'should not term himself too old to feel the charms of minstrelsy.'

The Constable smiled, not insensible to the flattery which assigned to him the character of a younger gallant. 'Thou art a jester,' he said, 'I warrant me, in addition to thy other qualities?'

'No,' replied the minstrel, 'it is a branch of our profession which I have for some time renounced: my fortunes have put me out of tune for jesting.'

'Nay, comrade,' said the Constable, 'if thou hast been hardly dealt with in the world, and canst comply with the rules of a family so strictly ordered as mine, it is possible we may agree together better than I thought. What is thy name and country? Thy speech, methinks, sounds somewhat foreign.'

'I am an Armorican, my lord, from the merry shores of Morbihan; and hence my tongue hath some touch of my country speech. My name is Renault Vidal.'

'Such being the case, Renault,' said the Constable, 'thou shalt follow me, and I will give orders to the master of my household to have thee attired something according to thy function, but in more orderly guise than thou now appearest in. Dost thou understand the use of a weapon?'

'Indifferently, my lord,' said the Armorican; at the same time taking a sword from the wall, he drew it, and made a pass with it so close to the Constable's body, as he sat on the couch, that he started up, crying, 'Villain, forbear!'

'La you! noble sir,' replied Vidal, lowering with all sub-

mission the point of his weapon, 'I have already given you a proof of sleight which has alarmed even your experience; I have an hundred other besides.'

'It may be so,' said De Lacy, somewhat ashamed at having shown himself moved by the sudden and lively action of the juggler; 'but I love not jesting with edge-tools, and have too much to do with sword and sword-blows in earnest to toy with them; so I pray you let us have no more of this, but call me my squire and my chamberlain, for I am about to array me and go to mass.'

The religious duties of the morning performed, it was the Constable's intention to visit the lady abbess, and communicate, with the necessary precautions and qualifications, the altered relations in which he was placed towards her niece, by the resolution he had been compelled to adopt, of departing for the Crusade before accomplishing his marriage, in the terms of the precontract already entered into. He was conscious that it would be difficult to reconcile the good lady to this change of measures, and he delayed some time ere he could think of the best mode of communicating and softening the unpleasant intelligence. An interval was also spent in a visit to his nephew, whose state of convalescence continued to be as favourable as if in truth it had been a miraculous consequence of the Constable's having complied with the advice of the Archbishop.

From the lodging of Damian, the Constable proceeded to the convent of the Benedictine abbess. But she had been already made acquainted with the circumstances which he came to communicate, by a still earlier visit from the Archbishop Baldwin himself. The Primate had undertaken the office of mediator on this occasion, conscious that his success of the evening before must have placed the Constable in a delicate situation with the relations of his betrothed bride, and willing, by his countenance and authority, to reconcile the disputes which might ensue. Perhaps he had better have left Hugo de Lacy to plead his own cause; for the abbess, though she listened to the communication with all the respect due to the highest dignitary of the English Church, drew consequences from the Constable's change of resolution which the Primate had not expected. She ventured to oppose no obstacle to De Lacy's accomplishment of his vows, but strongly argued that the contract with her niece should be entirely set aside, and each party left at liberty to form a new choice.

It was in vain that the Archbishop endeavoured to dazzle the

abbess with the future honours to be won by the Constable in the Holy Land, the splendour of which would attach not to his lady alone, but to all in the remotest degree allied to or connected with her. All his eloquence was to no purpose, though upon so favourite a topic he exerted it to the utmost. The abbess, it is true, remained silent for a moment after his arguments had been exhausted, but it was only to consider how she should intimate, in a suitable and reverent manner, that children, the usual attendants of a happy union, and the existence of which she looked to for the continuation of the house of her father and brother, could not be hoped for with any probability unless the precontract was followed by marriage, and the residence of the married parties in the same country. She therefore insisted that, the Constable having altered his intentions in this most important particular, the *fiançailles* should be entirely abrogated and set aside; and she demanded of the Primate, as an act of justice, that, as he had interfered to prevent the bridegroom's execution of his original purpose, he should now assist with his influence wholly to dissolve an engagement which had been thus materially innovated upon.

The Primate, who was sensible he had himself occasioned De Lacy's breach of contract, felt himself bound in honour and reputation to prevent consequences so disagreeable to his friend as the dissolution of an engagement in which his interest and inclinations were alike concerned. He reproved the lady abbess for the carnal and secular views which she, a dignitary of the church, entertained upon the subject of matrimony and concerning the interest of her house. He even upbraided her with selfishly preferring the continuation of the line of Berenger to the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, and denounced to her that Heaven would be avenged of the short-sighted and merely human policy which postponed the interests of Christendom to those of an individual family.

After this severe homily, the prelate took his departure, leaving the abbess highly incensed, though she prudently forbore returning any irreverent answer to his paternal admonition.

In this humour the venerable lady was found by the Constable himself, when, with some embarrassment, he proceeded to explain to her the necessity of his present departure for Palestine.

She received the communication with sullen dignity, her ample black robe and scapular seeming, as it were, to swell out in yet prouder folds as she listened to the reasons and the

emergencies which compelled the Constable of Chester to defer the marriage, which he avowed was the dearest wish of his heart, until after his return from the Crusade, for which he was about to set forth.

'Methinks,' replied the abbess, with much coldness, 'if this communication is meant for earnest — and it were no fit business, I myself no fit person, for jesting with — methinks the Constable's resolution should have been proclaimed to us yesterday, before the *fiançailles* had united his troth with that of Eveline Berenger, under expectations very different from those which he now announces.'

'On the word of a knight and a gentleman, reverend lady,' said the Constable, 'I had not then the slightest thought that I should be called upon to take a step no less distressing to me than, as I see with pain, it is unpleasing to you.'

'I can scarcely conceive,' replied the abbess, 'the cogent reasons which, existing as they must have done yesterday, have nevertheless delayed their operation until to-day.'

'I own,' said De Lacy, reluctantly, 'that I entertained too ready hopes of obtaining a remission from my vow, which my Lord of Canterbury hath, in his zeal for Heaven's service, deemed it necessary to refuse me.'

'At least, then,' said the abbess, veiling her resentment under the appearance of extreme coldness, 'your lordship will do us the justice to place us in the same situation in which we stood yesterday morning; and, by joining with my niece and her friends in desiring the abrogation of a marriage contract, entered into with very different views from those which you now entertain, put a young person in that state of liberty of which she is at present deprived by her contract with you?'

'Ah, madam!' said the Constable, 'what do you ask of me? and in a tone how cold and indifferent do you demand me to resign hopes the dearest which my bosom ever entertained since the life-blood warmed it!'

'I am unacquainted with language belonging to such feelings, my lord,' replied the abbess; 'but methinks the prospects which could be so easily adjourned for years might, by a little, and a very little, further self-control be altogether abandoned.'

Hugo de Lacy paced the room in agitation, nor did he answer until after a considerable pause. 'If your niece, madam, shares the sentiments which you have expressed, I could not, indeed, with justice to her, or perhaps to myself,

desire to retain that interest in her which our solemn espousals have given me. But I must know my doom from her own lips; and if it is as severe as that which your expressions lead me to fear, I will go to Palestine the better soldier of Heaven that I shall have little left on earth that can interest me.'

The abbess, without farther answer, called on her precentrix, and desired her to command her niece's attendance immediately. The precentrix bowed reverently and withdrew.

'May I presume to inquire,' said De Lacy, 'whether the Lady Eveline hath been possessed of the circumstances which have occasioned this unhappy alteration in my purpose?'

'I have communicated the whole to her, from point to point,' said the abbess, 'even as it was explained to me this morning by my Lord of Canterbury — for with him I have already spoken upon the subject — and confirmed but now by your lordship's own mouth.'

'I am little obliged to the Archbishop,' said the Constable, 'for having forestalled my excuses in the quarter where it was most important for me that they should be accurately stated and favourably received.'

'That,' said the abbess, 'is but an item of the account betwixt you and the prelate; it concerns not us.'

'Dare I venture to hope,' continued De Lacy, without taking offence at the dryness of the abbess's manner, 'that Lady Eveline has heard this most unhappy change of circumstances without emotion — I would say, without displeasure?'

'She is the daughter of a Berenger, my lord,' answered the abbess, 'and it is our custom to punish a breach of faith or to contemn it, never to grieve over it. What my niece may do in this case I know not. I am a woman of religion, sequestered from the world, and would advise peace and Christian forgiveness, with a proper sense of contempt for the unworthy treatment which she has received. She has followers and vassals, and friends, doubtless, and advisers, who may not, in blinded zeal for worldly honour, recommend to her to sit down slightly with this injury, but desire she should rather appeal to the king, or to the arms of her father's followers, unless her liberty is restored to her by the surrender of the contract into which she has been enticed. But she comes to answer for herself.'

Eveline entered at the moment, leaning on Rose's arm. She had laid aside mourning since the ceremony of the *fiançailles* and was dressed in a kirtle of white, with an upper robe of pale blue. Her head was covered with a veil of white gauze

so thin as to float about her like the misty cloud usually painted around the countenance of a seraph. But the face of Eveline, though in beauty not unworthy one of this angelic order, was at present far from resembling that of a seraph in tranquillity of expression. Her limbs trembled, her cheeks were pale, the tinge of red around the eyelids expressed recent tears; yet, amidst these natural signs of distress and uncertainty, there was an air of profound resignation — a resolution to discharge her duty in every emergence reigning in the solemn expression of her eye and eyebrow, and showing her prepared to govern the agitation which she could not entirely subdue. And so well were these opposing qualities of timidity and resolution mingled on her cheek, that Eveline, in the utmost pride of her beauty, never looked more fascinating than at that instant; and Hugo de Lacy, hitherto rather an unimpassioned lover, stood in her presence with feelings as if all the exaggerations of romance were realised, and his mistress were a being of a higher sphere, from whose doom he was to receive happiness or misery, life or death.

It was under the influence of such a feeling that the warrior dropped on one knee before Eveline, took the hand which she rather resigned than gave to him, pressed it to his lips fervently, and, ere he parted with it, moistened it with one of the few tears which he was ever known to shed. But, although surprised, and carried out of his character by a sudden impulse, he regained his composure on observing that the abbess regarded his humiliation, if it can be so termed, with an air of triumph; and he entered on his defence before Eveline with a manly earnestness, not devoid of fervour, nor free from agitation, yet made in a tone of firmness and pride which seemed assumed to meet and control that of the offended abbess.

'Lady,' he said, addressing Eveline, 'you have heard from the venerable abbess in what unhappy position I have been placed since yesterday by the rigour of the Archbishop — perhaps I should rather say by his just though severe interpretation of my engagement in the Crusade. I cannot doubt that all this has been stated with accurate truth by the venerable lady; but, as I must no longer call her my friend, let me fear whether she has done me justice in her commentary upon the unhappy necessity which must presently compel me to leave my country, and with my country to forego — at best to postpone — the fairest hopes which man ever entertained. The venerable lady hath upbraided me, that, being myself the cause

that the execution of yesterday's contract is postponed, I would fain keep it suspended over your head for an indefinite term of years. No one resigns willingly such rights as yesterday gave me; and, let me speak a boastful word, sooner than yield them up to man of woman born, I would hold a fair field against all comers, with grinded sword and sharp spear, from sunrise to sunset, for three days' space. But what I would retain at the price of a thousand lives, I am willing to renounce if it would cost you a single sigh. If, therefore, you think you cannot remain happy as the betrothed of De Lacy, you may command my assistance to have the contract annulled, and make some more fortunate man happy.'

He would have gone on, but felt the danger of being overpowered again by those feelings of tenderness so new to his steady nature, that he blushed to give way to them.

Eveline remained silent.

The abbess took the word. 'Kinswoman,' she said, 'you hear that the generosity, or the justice, of the Constable of Chester proposes, in consequence of his departure upon a distant and perilous expedition, to cancel a contract entered into upon the specific and precise understanding that he was to remain in England for its fulfilment. You cannot, methinks, hesitate to accept of the freedom which he offers you, with thanks for his bounty. For my part, I will reserve mine own until I shall see that your joint application is sufficient to win to your purpose his Grace of Canterbury, who may again interfere with the actions of his friend the Lord Constable, over whom he has already exerted so much influence, for the weal, doubtless, of his spiritual concerns.'

'If it is meant by your words, venerable lady,' said the Constable, 'that I have any purpose of sheltering myself behind the prelate's authority, to avoid doing that which I proclaim my readiness, though not my willingness, to do, I can only say that you are the first who has doubted the faith of Hugo de Lacy.' And while the proud baron thus addressed a female and a recluse, he could not prevent his eye from sparkling and his cheek from flushing.

'My gracious and venerable kinswoman,' said Eveline, summoning together her resolution, 'and you, my good lord, be not offended, if I pray you not to increase by groundless suspicions and hasty resentments your difficulties and mine. My lord, the obligations which I lie under to you are such as I can never discharge, since they comprehend fortune, life, and honour.

Know that, in my anguish of mind, when besieged by the Welsh in my castle of the Garde Doloureuse, I vowed to the Virgin that, my honour safe, I would place myself at the disposal of him whom Our Lady should employ as her instrument to relieve me from yonder hour of agony. In giving me a deliverer, she gave me a master; nor could I desire a more noble one than Hugo de Lacy.'

'God forbid, lady,' said the Constable, speaking eagerly, as if he was afraid his resolution should fail him ere he could get the renunciation uttered, 'that I should, by such a tie, to which you subjected yourself in the extremity of your distress, bind you to any resolution in my favour which can put force on your own inclinations!'

The abbess herself could not help expressing her applause of this sentiment, declaring it was spoken like a Norman gentleman; but, at the same time, her eyes, turned towards her niece, seemed to exhort her to beware how she declined to profit by the candour of De Lacy.

But Eveline proceeded, with her eyes fixed on the ground, and a slight colour overspreading her face, to state her own sentiments, without listening to the suggestions of any one. 'I will own, noble sir,' she said, 'that, when your valour had rescued me from approaching destruction, I could have wished — honouring and respecting you, as I had done your late friend, my excellent father — that you could have accepted a daughter's service from me. I do not pretend entirely to have surmounted these sentiments, although I have combated them, as being unworthy of me and ungrateful to you. But, from the moment you were pleased to honour me by a claim on this poor hand, I have studiously examined my sentiments towards you, and taught myself so far to make them coincide with my duty, that I may call myself assured that De Lacy would not find in Eveline Berenger an indifferent, far less an unworthy, bride. In this, sir, you may boldly confide, whether the union you have sought for takes place instantly or is delayed till a longer season. Still farther, I must acknowledge that the postponement of these nuptials will be more agreeable to me than their immediate accomplishment. I am at present very young, and totally inexperienced. Two or three years will, I trust, render me yet more worthy the regard of a man of honour.'

At this declaration in his favour, however cold and qualified, De Lacy had as much difficulty to restrain his transports as formerly to moderate his agitation.

'Angel of bounty and of kindness!' he said, kneeling once more, and again possessing himself of her hand, 'perhaps I ought in honour to resign voluntarily those hopes which you decline to ravish from me forcibly. But who could be capable of such unrelenting magnanimity? Let me hope that my devoted attachment, that which you shall hear of me when at a distance, that which you shall know of me when near you, may give to your sentiments a more tender warmth than they now express; and, in the meanwhile, blame me not that I accept your plighted faith anew, under the conditions which you attach to it. I am conscious my wooing has been too late in life to expect the animated returns proper to youthful passion. Blame me not if I remain satisfied with those calmer sentiments which make life happy, though they cannot make passion rapturous. Your hand remains in my grasp, but it acknowledges not my pressure. Can it be that it refuses to ratify what your lips have said?'

'Never, noble De Lacy!' said Eveline, with more animation than she had yet expressed; and it appeared that the tone was at length sufficiently encouraging, since her lover was emboldened to take the lips themselves for guarantee.

It was with an air of pride, mingled with respect, that, after having received this pledge of fidelity, he turned to conciliate and to appease the offended abbess. 'I trust, venerable mother,' he said, 'that you will resume your former kind thoughts of me, which I am aware were only interrupted by your tender anxiety for the interest of her who should be dearest to us both. Let me hope that I may leave this fair flower under protection of the honoured lady who is her next in blood, happy and secure as she must ever be while listening to your counsels and residing within these sacred walls.'

But the abbess was too deeply displeased to be propitiated by a compliment which perhaps it had been better policy to have delayed till a calmer season. 'My lord,' she said, 'and you, fair kinswoman, you ought needs to be aware how little my counsels, not frequently given where they are unwillingly listened to, can be of avail to those embarked in worldly affairs. I am a woman dedicated to religion, to solitude, and seclusion — to the service, in brief, of Our Lady and St. Benedict. I have been already censured by my superior because I have, for love of you, fair niece, mixed more deeply in secular affairs than became the head of a convent of recluses; I will merit no farther blame on such an account, nor can you expect it of

me. My brother's daughter, unfettered by worldly ties, had been the welcome sharer of my poor solitude. But this house is too mean for the residence of the vowed bride of a mighty baron; nor do I, in my lowliness and inexperience, feel fitness to exercise over such a one that authority which must belong to me over every one whom this roof protects. The grave tenor of our devotions, and the serener contemplation to which the females of this house are devoted,' continued the abbess, with increasing heat and vehemence, 'shall not, for the sake of my worldly connexions, be disturbed by the intrusion of one whose thoughts must needs be on the worldly toys of love and marriage.'

'I do indeed believe, reverend mother,' said the Constable, in his turn giving way to displeasure, 'that a richly-dowered maiden, unwedded, and unlikely to wed, were a fitter and more welcome inmate to the convent than one who cannot be separated from the world, and whose wealth is not likely to increase the house's revenues.'

The Constable did the abbess great injury in this hasty insinuation, and it only went to confirm her purpose of rejecting all charge of her niece during his absence. She was in truth as disinterested as haughty; and her only reason for anger against her niece was, that her advice had not been adopted without hesitation, although the matter regarded Eveline's happiness exclusively.

The ill-timed reflection of the Constable confirmed her in the resolution which she had already, and hastily, adopted. 'May Heaven forgive you, sir knight,' she replied, 'your injurious thoughts of His servants! It is indeed time, for your soul's sake, that you do penance in the Holy Land, having such rash judgments to repent of. For you, my niece, you cannot want that hospitality which, without verifying, or seeming to verify, unjust suspicions, I cannot now grant to you, while you have, in your kinswoman of Baldringham, a secular relation, whose nearness of blood approaches mine, and who may open her gates to you without incurring the unworthy censure that she means to enrich herself at your cost.'

The Constable saw the deadly paleness which came over Eveline's cheek at this proposal, and, without knowing the cause of her repugnance, he hastened to relieve her from the apprehensions which she seemed evidently to entertain. 'No, reverend mother,' he said; 'since *you* so harshly reject the care of your kinswoman, she shall not be a burden to any of her

other relatives. While Hugo de Lacy hath six gallant castles, and many a manor besides, to maintain fire upon their hearths, his betrothed bride shall burden no one with her society who may regard it as otherwise than a great honour; and methinks I were much poorer than Heaven hath made me, could I not furnish friends and followers sufficient to serve, obey, and protect her.'

'No, my lord,' said Eveline, recovering from the dejection into which she had been thrown by the unkindness of her relative; 'since some unhappy destiny separates me from the protection of my father's sister, to whom I could so securely have resigned myself, I will neither apply for shelter to any more distant relation nor accept of that which you, my lord, so generously offer; since my doing so might excite harsh, and, I am sure, undeserved, reproaches against her by whom I was driven to choose a less advisable dwelling-place. I have made my resolution. I have, it is true, only one friend left, but she is a powerful one, and is able to protect me against the particular evil fate which seems to follow me, as well as against the ordinary evils of human life.'

'The queen, I suppose?' said the abbess, interrupting her impatiently.

'The Queen of Heaven! venerable kinswoman,' answered Eveline — 'our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, ever gracious to our house, and so lately my especial guardian and protectress. Methinks, since the vowed votaress of the Virgin rejects me, it is to her holy patroness whom I ought to apply for succour.'

The venerable dame, taken somewhat at unawares by this answer, pronounced the interjection 'Umph!' in a tone better befitting a Lollard or an Iconoclast than a Catholic abbess, and a daughter of the house of Berenger. Truth is, the lady abbess's hereditary devotion to the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse was much decayed since she had known the full merits of another gifted image, the property of her own convent.

Recollecting herself, however, she remained silent, while the Constable alleged the vicinity of the Welsh, as what might possibly again render the abode of his betrothed bride at the Garde Doloureuse as perilous as she had on a former occasion found it. To this Eveline replied, by reminding him of the great strength of her native fortress, the various sieges which it had withstood, and the important circumstance, that, upon the late occasion, it was only endangered because, in compliance with a point of honour, her father Raymond had sallied

out with the garrison, and fought at disadvantage a battle under the walls. She farther suggested, that it was easy for the Constable to name, from among his own vassals or hers, a seneschal of such approved prudence and valour as might ensure the safety of the place and of its lady.

Ere De Lacy could reply to her arguments, the abbess rose, and, pleading her total inability to give counsel in secular affairs, and the rules of her order, which called her, as she said, with a heightened colour and raised voice, 'to the simple and peaceful discharge of her conventual duties,' she left the betrothed parties in the locutory, or parlour, without any company save Rose, who prudently remained at some distance.

The issue of their private conference seemed agreeable to both; and when Eveline told Rose that they were to return presently to the Garde Doloureuse, under a sufficient escort, and were to remain there during the period of the Crusade, it was in a tone of heartfelt satisfaction which her follower had not heard her make use of for many days. She spoke also highly in praise of the kind acquiescence of the Constable in her wishes, and of his whole conduct with a warmth of gratitude approaching to a more tender feeling.

'And yet, my dearest lady,' said Rose, 'if you will speak unfeignedly, you must, I am convinced, allow, that you look upon this interval of years interposed betwixt your contract and your marriage rather as a respite than in any other light.'

'I confess it,' said Eveline, 'nor have I concealed from my future lord that such are my feelings, ungracious as they may seem. But it is my youth, Rose — my extreme youth, which makes me fear the duties of De Lacy's wife. Then those evil auguries hang strangely about me. Devoted to evil by one kinswoman, expelled almost from the roof of another, I seem to myself, at present, a creature who must carry distress with her, pass where she will. This evil hour, and, what is more, the apprehensions of it, will give way to time. When I shall have attained the age of twenty, Rose, I shall be a full-grown woman, with all the soul of a Berenger strong within me, to overcome those doubts and tremors which agitate the girl of seventeen.'

'Ah! my sweet mistress,' answered Rose, 'may God and Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse guide all for the best! But I would that this contract had not taken place, or, having taken place, that it could have been fulfilled by your immediate union.'

CHAPTER XX

The king called down his merry-men all,
By one, and by two, and three;
Earl Marshal was wont to be the foremost man,
But the hindmost man was he.

Old Ballad.

IF the Lady Eveline retired satisfied and pleased from her private interview with De Lacy, the joy on the part of the Constable arose to a higher pitch of rapture than he was in the habit of feeling or expressing; and it was augmented by a visit of the leeches who attended his nephew, from whom he received a minute and particular account of his present disorder, with every assurance of a speedy recovery.

The Constable caused alms to be distributed to the convents and to the poor, masses to be said, and tapers to be lighted. He visited the Archbishop, and received from him his full approbation of the course which he proposed to pursue, with the promise that, out of the plenary power which he held from the Pope, the prelate was willing, in consideration of his instant obedience, to limit his stay in the Holy Land to the term of three years, to become current from his leaving Britain, and to include the space necessary for his return to his native country. Indeed, having succeeded in the main point, the Archbishop judged it wise to concede every inferior consideration to a person of the Constable's rank and character, whose good-will to the proposed expedition was perhaps as essential to its success as his bodily presence.

In short, the Constable returned to his pavilion highly satisfied with the manner in which he had extricated himself from those difficulties which in the morning seemed almost insuperable; and when his officers assembled to disrobe him (for great feudal lords had their levees and couchees, in imitation of sovereign princes), he distributed gratuities among them, and jested and laughed in a much gayer humour than they had ever before witnessed.

'For thee,' he said, turning to Vidal, the minstrel, who, sumptuously dressed, stood to pay his respects among the other attendants, 'I will give thee nought at present; but do thou remain by my bedside until I am asleep, and I will next morning reward thy minstrelsy as I like it.'

'My lord,' said Vidal, 'I am already rewarded, both by the honour and by the liveries, which better befit a royal minstrel than one of my mean fame; but assign me a subject, and I will do my best, not out of greed of future largesses, but gratitude for past favours.'

'Gramercy, good fellow,' said the Constable. 'Guarine,' he added, addressing his squire, 'let the watch be posted, and do thou remain within the tent; stretch thyself on the bear-hide, and sleep, or listen to the minstrelsy, as thou likest best. Thou thinkest thyself a judge, I have heard, of such gear.'

It was usual, in those insecure times, for some faithful domestic to sleep at night within the tent of every great baron, that, if danger arose, he might not be unsupported or unprotected. Guarine accordingly drew his sword, and, taking it in his hand, stretched himself on the ground in such a manner that, on the slightest alarm, he could spring up, sword in hand. His broad black eyes, in which sleep contended with a desire to listen to the music, were fixed on Vidal, who saw them glittering in the reflection of the silver lamp, like those of a dragon or basilisk.

After a few preliminary touches on the chords of his rote, the minstrel requested of the Constable to name the subject on which he desired the exercise of his powers.

'The truth of woman,' answered Hugo de Lacy, as he laid his head upon his pillow.

After a short prelude, the minstrel obeyed, by singing nearly as follows: —

Woman's faith and woman's trust —
Write the characters in dust,
Stamp them on the running stream,
Print them on the moon's pale beam,
And each evanescent letter
Shall be clearer, firmer, better,
And more permanent, I ween,
Than the thing those letters mean.

I have strain'd the spider's thread
'Gainst the promise of a maid;
I have weigh'd a grain of sand
'Gainst her plight of heart and hand;

I told my true love of the token,
How her faith proved light, and her word was broken:
Again her word and truth she plight,
And I believed them again ere night.

'How now, sir knave,' said the Constable, raising himself on his elbow — 'from what drunken rhymer did you learn that half-witted satire?'

'From an old, ragged, cross-grained friend of mine, called experience,' answered Vidal. 'I pray Heaven he may never take your lordship, or any other worthy man, under his tuition.'

'Go to, fellow,' said the Constable, in reply; 'thou art one of those wiseacres, I warrant me, that would fain be thought witty, because thou canst make a jest of those things which wiser men hold worthy of most worship — the honour of men and the truth of women. Dost thou call thyself a minstrel, and hast no tale of female fidelity?'

'I had right many a one, noble sir, but I laid them aside when I disused my practice of the jesting part of the joyous science. Nevertheless, if it pleases your nobleness to listen, I can sing you an established lay upon such a subject.'

De Lacy made a sign of acquiescence, and laid himself as if to slumber; while Vidal began one of those interminable and almost innumerable adventures concerning that paragon of true lovers, fair Ysolte, and of the constant and uninterrupted faith and affection which she displayed, in numerous situations of difficulty and peril, to her paramour, the gallant Sir Tristrem, at the expense of her less favoured husband, the luckless King Mark of Cornwall, to whom, as all the world knows, Sir Tristrem was nephew.

This was not the lay of love and fidelity which De Lacy would have chosen; but a feeling like shame prevented his interrupting it, perhaps because he was unwilling to yield to or acknowledge the unpleasing sensations excited by the tenor of the tale. He soon fell asleep, or feigned to do so; and the harper, continuing for a time his monotonous chant, began at length himself to feel the influence of slumber: his words, and the notes which he continued to touch upon the harp, were broken and interrupted, and seemed to escape drowsily from his fingers and voice. At length the sounds ceased entirely, and the minstrel seemed to have sunk into profound repose, with his head reclining on his breast, and one arm dropped down by his side, while the other rested on his harp. His slumber, however,

was not very long, and when he awoke from it, and cast his eyes around him, reconnoitring, by the light of the night-lamp, whatever was in the tent, he felt a heavy hand, which pressed his shoulder as if gently to solicit his attention. At the same time the voice of the vigilant Philip Guarine whispered in his ear, 'Thine office for the night is ended; depart to thine own quarters with all the silence thou mayst.'

The minstrel wrapt himself in his cloak without reply, though perhaps not without feeling some resentment at a dismissal so unceremonious.

CHAPTER XXI

O! then I see Queen Mab has been with you.

Romeo and Juliet.

THE subject on which the mind has last been engaged at night is apt to occupy our thoughts even during slumber, when imagination, uncorrected by the organs of sense, weaves her own fantastic web out of whatever ideas rise at random in the sleeper. It is not surprising, therefore, that De Lacy in his dreams had some confused idea of being identified with the unlucky Mark of Cornwall; and that he awakened from such unpleasant visions with a brow more clouded than when he was preparing for his couch on the evening before. He was silent, and seemed lost in thought, while his squire assisted at his levee with the respect now only paid to sovereigns. 'Guarine,' at length he said, 'know you the stout Fleming, who was said to have borne him so well at the siege of the Garde Doloureuse — a tall, big, brawny man?'

'Surely, my lord,' answered his squire, 'I know Wilkin Flammock; I saw him but yesterday.'

'Indeed!' replied the Constable. 'Here, meanest thou — in this city of Gloucester?'

'Assuredly, my good lord. He came hither partly about his merchandise, partly, I think, to see his daughter Rose, who is in attendance on the gracious young Lady Eveline.'

'He is a stout soldier, is he not?'

'Like most of his kind — a rampart to a castle, but rubbish in the field,' said the Norman squire.

'Faithful, also, is he not?' continued the Constable.

'Faithful as most Flemings, while you can pay for their faith,' replied Guarine, wondering a little at the unusual interest taken in one whom he esteemed a being of an inferior order; when, after some farther inquiries, the Constable ordered the Fleming's attendance to be presently commanded.

Other business of the morning now occurred, for his speedy

departure required many arrangements to be hastily adopted, when, as the Constable was giving audience to several officers of his troops, the bulky figure of Wilkin Flammock was seen at the entrance of the pavilion, in jerkin of white cloth, and having only a knife by his side.

'Leave the tent, my masters,' said De Lacy, 'but continue in attendance in the neighbourhood; for here comes one I must speak to in private.'

The officers withdrew, and the Constable and Fleming were left alone. 'You are Wilkin Flammock, who fought well against the Welsh at the Garde Doloureuse?'

'I did my best, my lord,' answered Wilkin; 'I was bound to it by my bargain, and I hope ever to act like a man of credit.'

'Methinks,' said the Constable, 'that you, so stout of limb, and, as I hear, so bold in spirit, might look a little higher than this weaving trade of thine.'

'No one is reluctant to mend his station, my lord,' said Wilkin; 'yet am I so far from complaining of mine, that I would willingly consent it should never be better, on condition I could be assured it were never worse.'

'Nay, but, Flammock,' said the Constable, 'I mean higher things for you than your modesty apprehends: I mean to leave thee in a charge of great trust.'

'Let it concern bales of drapery, my lord, and no one will perform it better,' said the Fleming.

'Away! thou art too lowly-minded,' said the Constable. 'What think'st thou of being dubbed knight, as thy valour well deserves, and left as chatelaine of the Garde Doloureuse?'

'For the knighthood, my lord, I should crave your forgiveness; for it would sit on me like a gilded helmet on a hog. For any charge, whether of castle or cottage, I trust I might discharge it as well as another.'

'I fear me thy rank must be in some way mended,' said the Constable, surveying the unmilitary dress of the figure before him; 'it is at present too mean to befit the protector and guardian of a young lady of high birth and rank.'

'I the guardian of a young lady of birth and rank!' said Flammock, his light, large eyes turning larger, lighter, and rounder as he spoke.

'Even thou,' said the Constable. 'The Lady Eveline proposes to take up her residence in her castle of the Garde Doloureuse. I have been casting about to whom I may entrust

the keeping of her person, as well as of the stronghold. Were I to choose some knight of name, as I have many in my household, he would be setting about to do deeds of vassalage upon the Welsh, and engaging himself in turmoils, which would render the safety of the castle precarious; or he would be absent on feats of chivalry, tournaments, and hunting-parties; or he would, perchance, have shows of that light nature under the walls, or even within the courts of the castle, turning the secluded and quiet abode which becomes the situation of the Lady Eveline into the misrule of a dissolute revel. Thee I can confide in: thou wilt fight when it is requisite, yet wilt not provoke danger for the sake of danger itself; thy birth, thy habits will lead thee to avoid those gaieties, which, however fascinating to others, cannot but be distasteful to thee; thy management will be as regular as I will take care that it shall be honourable; and thy relation to her favourite, Rose, will render thy guardianship more agreeable to the Lady Eveline than, perchance, one of her own rank. And, to speak to thee a language which thy nation readily comprehends, the reward, Fleming, for the regular discharge of this most weighty trust shall be beyond thy most flattering hope.'

The Fleming had listened to the first part of this discourse with an expression of surprise, which gradually gave way to one of deep and anxious reflection. He gazed fixedly on the earth for a minute after the Constable had ceased speaking, and then raising up his eyes suddenly, said, 'It is needless to seek for roundabout excuses. This cannot be your earnest, my lord; but if it is, the scheme is naught.'

'How and wherefore?' asked the Constable, with displeased surprise.

'Another man might grasp at your bounty,' continued Wilkin, 'and leave you to take chance of the value you were to receive for it; but I am a downright dealer, I will not take payment for service I cannot render.'

'But I demand, once more, wherefore thou canst not, or rather wilt not, accept this trust?' said the Constable. 'Surely, if I am willing to confer such confidence, it is well thy part to answer it.'

'True, my lord,' said the Fleming; 'but methinks the noble Lord de Lacy should feel, and the wise Lord de Lacy should foresee, that a Flemish weaver is no fitting guardian for his plighted bride. Think her shut up in yonder solitary castle, under such respectable protection, and reflect how long the

place will be solitary in this land of love and of adventure! We shall have minstrels singing ballads by the threave under our windows, and such twangling of harps as would be enough to frighten our walls from their foundations, as clerks say happened to those of Jericho. We shall have as many knights-errant around us as ever had Charlemagne or King Arthur. Mercy on me! A less matter than a fine and noble recluse immured — so will they term it — in a tower, under the guardianship of an old Flemish weaver, would bring half the chivalry in England round us, to break lances, vow vows, display love-liveries, and I know not what follies besides. Think you such gallants, with the blood flying through their veins like quicksilver, would much mind *my* bidding them begone?'

'Draw bolts, up with the drawbridge, drop portcullis,' said the Constable, with a constrained smile.

'And thinks your lordship such gallants would mind these impediments? such are the very essence of the adventures which they come to seek. The Knight of the Swan would swim through the moat; he of the Eagle would fly over the walls; he of the Thunderbolt would burst open the gates.'

'Ply cross-bow and mangonel,' said De Lacy.

'And be besieged in form,' said the Fleming, 'like the Castle of Tintadgel in the old hangings, all for the love of fair lady? And then those gay dames and demoiselles, who go upon adventure from castle to castle, from tournament to tournament, with bare bosoms, flaunting plumes, poniards at their sides and javelins in their hands, chattering like magpies, and fluttering like jays, and ever and anon cooing like doves — how am I to exclude such from the Lady Eveline's privacy?'

'By keeping doors shut, I tell thee,' answered the Constable, still in the same tone of forced jocularity: 'a wooden bar will be thy warrant.'

'Ay, but,' answered Flammock, 'if the Flemish weaver say "shut," when the Norman young lady says "open," think which has best chance of being obeyed? At a word, my lord, for the matter of guardianship and such-like, I wash my hands of it: I would not undertake to be guardian to the chaste Susannah, though she lived in an enchanted castle which no living thing could approach.'

'Thou holdest the language and thoughts,' said De Lacy, 'of a vulgar debauchee, who laughs at female constancy, because he has lived only with the most worthless of the sex. Yet

thou shouldst know the contrary, having, as I know, a most virtuous daughter——'

'Whose mother was not less so,' said Wilkin, breaking in upon the Constable's speech with somewhat more emotion than he usually displayed. 'But law, my lord, gave me authority to govern and direct my wife, as both law and nature give me power and charge over my daughter. That which I can govern I can be answerable for; but how to discharge me so well of a delegated trust is another question. Stay at home, my good lord,' continued the honest Fleming, observing that his speech made some impression upon De Lacy: 'let a fool's advice for once be of avail to change a wise man's purpose, taken, let me say, in no wise hour. Remain in your own land, rule your own vassals, and protect your own bride. You only can claim her cheerful love and ready obedience; and sure I am that, without pretending to guess what she may do if separated from you, she will, under your own eye, do the duty of a faithful and a loving spouse.'

'And the Holy Sepulchre?' said the Constable, with a sigh, his heart confessing the wisdom of the advice, which circumstances prevented him from following.

'Let those who lost the Holy Sepulchre regain it, my lord,' replied Flammock. 'If those Latins and Greeks, as they call them, are no better men than I have heard, it signifies very little whether they or the heathen have the country that has cost Europe so much blood and treasure.'

'In good faith,' said the Constable, 'there is sense in what thou say'st; but I caution thee to repeat it not, lest thou be taken for a heretic or a Jew. For me, my word and oath are pledged beyond retreat, and I have only to consider whom I may best name for that important station, which thy caution has—not without some shadow of reason—induced thee to decline.'

'There is no man to whom your lordship can so naturally or honourably transfer such a charge,' said Wilkin Flammock, 'as to the kinsman near to you, and possessed of your trust; yet much better would it be were there no such trust to be reposed in any one.'

'If,' said the Constable, 'by my near kinsman you mean Randal de Lacy, I care not if I tell you that I consider him as totally worthless, and undeserving of honourable confidence.'

'Nay, I mean another,' said Flammock, 'nearer to you by blood, and, unless I greatly mistake, much nigher also in

affection : I had in mind your lordship's nephew, Damian de Lacy.'

The Constable started as if a wasp had stung him ; but instantly replied, with forced composure, 'Damian was to have gone in my stead to Palestine, it now seems I must go in his ; for, since this last illness, the leeches have totally changed their minds, and consider that warmth of the climate as dangerous which they formerly decided to be salutary. But our learned doctors, like our learned priests, must ever be in the right, change their counsels as they may, and we poor laymen still in the wrong. I can, it is true, rely on Damian with the utmost confidence ; but he is young, Flammock — very young — and, in that particular, resembles but too nearly the party who might be otherwise committed to his charge.'

'Then, once more, my lord,' said the plain-spoken Fleming, 'remain at home, and be yourself the protector of what is naturally so dear to you.'

'Once more, I repeat that I cannot,' answered the Constable. 'The step which I have adopted as a great duty may perhaps be a great error, I only know that it is irretrievable.'

'Trust your nephew, then, my lord,' replied Wilkin ; 'he is honest and true, and it is better trusting young lions than old wolves. He may err, perhaps, but it will not be from premeditated treachery.'

'Thou art right, Flammock,' said the Constable ; 'and perhaps I ought to wish I had sooner asked thy counsel, blunt as it is. But let what has passed be a secret betwixt us ; and bethink thee of something that may advantage thee more than the privilege of speaking about my affairs.'

'That accompt will be easily settled, my lord,' replied Flammock ; 'for my object was to ask your lordship's favour to obtain certain extensions of our privileges in yonder wild corner where we Flemings have made our retreat.'

'Thou shalt have them, so they be not exorbitant,' said the Constable. And the honest Fleming, among whose good qualities scrupulous delicacy was not the foremost, hastened to detail, with great minuteness, the particulars of his request or petition, long pursued in vain, but to which this interview was the means of ensuring success.

The Constable, eager to execute the resolution which he had formed, hastened to the lodging of Damian de Lacy, and, to the no small astonishment of his nephew, intimated to him his change of destination, alleging his own hurried departure,

Damian's late and present illness, together with the necessary protection to be afforded to the Lady Eveline, as reasons why his nephew must needs remain behind him — to represent him during his absence, to protect the family rights and assert the family honour of the house of De Lacy, above all, to act as the guardian of the young and beautiful bride whom his uncle and patron had been in some measure compelled to abandon for a time.

Damian yet occupied his bed while the Constable communicated this change of purpose. Perhaps he might think the circumstance fortunate, that in this position he could conceal from his uncle's observation the various emotions which he could not help feeling; while the Constable, with the eagerness of one who is desirous of hastily finishing what he has to say on an unpleasing subject, hurried over an account of the arrangements which he had made, in order that his nephew might have the means of discharging, with sufficient effect, the important trust committed to him.

The youth listened as to a voice in a dream, which he had not the power of interrupting, though there was something within him which whispered there would be both prudence and integrity in remonstrating against his uncle's alteration of plan. Something he accordingly attempted to say, when the Constable at length paused; but it was too feebly spoken to shake a resolution fully though hastily adopted, and explicitly announced, by one not in the use to speak before his purpose was fixed, or to alter it when it was declared.

The remonstrance of Damian, besides, if [illegible] be termed such, was spoken in terms too contradictory [illegible] ntelligible. In one moment he professed his regret for the [illegible] which he had hoped to gather in Palestine, and implored his uncle not to alter his purpose, but permit him to attend his banner thither; and in the next sentence he professed his readiness to defend the safety of Lady Eveline with the last drop of his blood. De Lacy saw nothing inconsistent in these feelings, though they were for the moment contradictory to each other. It was natural, he thought, that a young knight should be desirous to win honour — natural also that he should willingly assume a charge so honourable and important as th[illegible]ith which he proposed to invest him; and therefore he thought it was no wonder that, assuming his new office willingly, the young man should yet feel regret at losing the prospe[illegible] of honourable adventure, which he must abandon. He ther[illegible]ore only smiled

in reply to the broken expostulations of his nephew; and, having confirmed his former arrangement, left the young man to reflect at leisure on his change of destination, while he himself, in a second visit to the Benedictine abbey, communicated the purpose which he had adopted to the abbess and to his bride-elect.

The displeasure of the former lady was in no measure abated by this communication, in which, indeed, she affected to take very little interest. She pleaded her religious duties, and her want of knowledge of secular affairs, if she should chance to mistake the usages of the world; yet she had always, she said, understood that the guardians of the young and beautiful of her own sex were chosen from the more mature of the other.

'Your own unkindness, lady,' answered the Constable, 'leaves me no better choice than I have made. Since the Lady Eveline's nearest friends deny her the privilege of their roof, on account of the claim with which she has honoured me, I, on my side, were worse than ungrateful did I not secure for her the protection of my nearest male heir. Damian is young, but he is true and honourable; nor does the chivalry of England afford me a better choice.'

Eveline seemed surprised, and even struck with consternation, at the resolution which her bridegroom thus suddenly announced; and perhaps it was fortunate that the remark of the lady abbess made the answer of the Constable necessary, and prevented him from observing that her colour shifted more than once from pale to deep red.

Rose, who was not excluded from the conference, drew close up to her mistress; and, by affecting to adjust her veil, while in secret she strongly pressed her hand, gave her time and encouragement to compose her mind for a reply. It was brief and decisive, and announced with a firmness which showed that the uncertainty of the moment had passed away or been suppressed. 'In case of danger,' she said, 'she would not fail to apply to Damian de Lacy to come to her aid, as he had once done before; but she did not apprehend any danger at present within her own secure castle of the Garde Doloureuse, where it was her purpose to dwell, attended only by her own household. She was resolved,' she continued, 'in consideration of her peculiar condition, to observe the strictest retirement, which she expected would not be violated even by the noble young knight who was to act as her guardian, unless some apprehension for her safety made his visit unavoidable.'

The abbess acquiesced, though coldly, in a proposal which her ideas of decorum recommended; and preparations were hastily made for the Lady Eveline's return to the castle of her father. Two interviews which intervened before her leaving the convent were in their nature painful. The first was when Damian was formally presented to her by his uncle, as the delegate to whom he had committed the charge of his own property, and, which was much dearer to him, as he affirmed, the protection of her person and interest.

Eveline scarce trusted herself with one glance; but that single look comprehended and reported to her the ravage which disease, aided by secret grief, had made on the manly form and handsome countenance of the youth before her. She received his s[illegible]tation in a manner as embarrassed as that in which it was [illegible]de; and, to his hesitating proffer of service, answered, that 'She trusted only to be obliged to him for his good-will during the interval of his uncle's absence.'

Her parting with the Constable was the next trial which she was to undergo. It was not without emotion, although she preserved her modest composure, and De Lacy his calm gravity of deportment. His voice faltered, however, when he came to announce, that 'It were unjust she should be bound by the engagement which she had been graciously contented to abide under. Three years he had assigned for its term, to which space the Archbishop Baldwin had consented to shorten the period of his absence. If I appear not when these are elapsed,' he said, 'let the Lady Eveline conclude that the grave holds De Lacy, and seek out for her mate some happier man. She cannot find one more grateful, though there are many who better deserve her.'

On these terms they parted; and the Constable, speedily afterwards embarking, ploughed the narrow seas for the shores of Flanders, where he proposed to unite his forces with the count of that rich and warlike country, who had lately taken the cross, and to proceed by the route which should be found most practicable on their destination for the Holy Land. The broad pennon, with the arms of the Lacys, streamed forward with a favourable wind from the prow of the vessel, as if pointing to the quarter of the horizon where its renown was to be augmented; and, considering the fame of the leader, and the excellence of the soldiers who followed him, a more gallant band, in proportion to their numbers, never went to avenge on the Saracens the evils endured by the Latins of Palestine.

Meanwhile Eveline, after a cold parting with the abbess, whose offended dignity had not yet forgiven the slight regard which she had paid to her opinion, resumed her journey homeward to her paternal castle, where her household was to be arranged in a manner suggested by the Constable, and approved of by herself.

The same preparations were made for her accommodation at every halting-place which she had experienced upon her journey to Gloucester, and, as before, the purveyor was invisible, although she could be at little loss to guess his name. Yet it appeared as if the character of these preparations was in some degree altered. All the realities of convenience and accommodation, with the most perfect assurances of safety, accompanied her everywhere on the route; but they were no longer mingled with that display of tender gallantry and taste which marked that the attentions were paid to a young and beautiful female. The clearest fountain-head and the most shady grove were no longer selected for the noontide repast; but the house of some franklin, or a small abbey, afforded the necessary hospitality. All seemed to be ordered with the most severe attention to rank and decorum: it seemed as if a nun of some strict order, rather than a young maiden of high quality and a rich inheritance, had been journeying through the land; and Eveline, though pleased with the delicacy which seemed thus to respect her unprotected and peculiar condition, would sometimes think it unnecessary that, by so many indirect hints, it should be forced on her recollection.

She thought it strange, also, that Damian, to whose care she had been so solemnly committed, did not even pay his respects to her on the road. Something there was which whispered to her that close and frequent intercourse might be unbecoming, even dangerous; but surely the ordinary duties of a knight and gentleman enjoined him some personal communication with the maiden under his escort, were it only to ask if her accommodations had been made to her satisfaction, or if she had any special wish which was ungratified. The only intercourse, however, which took place betwixt them was through means of Amelot, Damian de Lacy's youthful page, who came at morn and evening to receive Eveline's commands concerning their route and the hours of journey and repose.

These formalities rendered the solitude of Eveline's return less endurable; and had it not been for the society of Rose, she would have found herself under an intolerably irksome degree

of constraint. She even hazarded to her attendant some remarks upon the singularity of De Lacy's conduct, who, authorised as he was by his situation, seemed yet as much afraid to approach her as if she had been a basilisk.

Rose let the first observation of this nature pass as if it had been unheard; but when her mistress made a second remark to the same purpose, she answered, with the truth and freedom of her character, though perhaps with less of her usual prudence, 'Damian de Lacy judges well, noble lady. He to whom the safe keeping of a royal treasure is entrusted should not indulge himself too often by gazing upon it.'

Eveline blushed, wrapt herself closer in her veil, nor did she again during their journey mention the name of Damian de Lacy.

When the grey turrets of the Garde Doloureuse greeted her sight on the evening of the second day, and she once more beheld her father's banner floating from its highest watch-tower in honour of her approach, her sensations were mingled with pain; but, upon the whole, she looked towards that ancient home as a place of refuge, where she might indulge the new train of thoughts which circumstances had opened to her, amid the same scenes which had sheltered her infancy and childhood.

She pressed forward her palfrey, to reach the ancient portal as soon as possible, bowed hastily to the well-known faces which showed themselves on all sides, but spoke to no one, until, dismounting at the chapel door, she had penetrated to the crypt, in which was preserved the miraculous painting. There, prostrate on the ground, she implored the guidance and protection of the Holy Virgin through those intricacies in which she had involved herself, by fulfilment of the vow which she had made in her anguish before the same shrine. If the prayer was misdirected, its purport was virtuous and sincere; nor are we disposed to doubt that it attained that Heaven towards which it was devoutly addressed.

CHAPTER XXII

The Virgin's image falls; yet some, I ween,
Not unforgiven the suppliant knee might bend,
As to a visible power, in which might blend
All that was mix'd, and reconciled in her,
Of mother's love with maiden's purity,
Of high with low, celestial with terrene.

WORDSWORTH.

THE household of the Lady Eveline, though of an establishment becoming her present and future rank, was of a solemn and sequestered character, corresponding to her place of residence, and the privacy connected with her situation, retired as she was from the class of maidens who are yet unengaged, and yet not united with that of matrons, who enjoyed the protection of a married name. Her immediate female attendants, with whom the reader is already acquainted, constituted almost her whole society. The garrison of the castle, besides household servants, consisted of veterans of tried faith, the followers of Berenger and of De Lacy in many a bloody field, to whom the duties of watching and warding were as familiar as any of their more ordinary occupations, and whose courage, nevertheless, tempered by age and experience, was not likely to engage in any rash adventure or accidental quarrel. These men maintained a constant and watchful guard, commanded by the steward, but under the eye of Father Aldrovand, who, besides discharging his ecclesiastical functions, was at times pleased to show some sparkles of his ancient military education.

Whilst this garrison afforded security against any sudden attempt on the part of the Welsh to surprise the castle, a strong body of forces were disposed within a few miles of the Garde Doloureuse, ready, on the least alarm, to advance to defend the place against any more numerous body of invaders, who, undeterred by the fate of Gwenwyn, might have the hardihood to form a regular siege. To this band, which, under the eye of Damian de Lacy himself, was kept in constant

readiness for action, could be added on occasion all the military force of the marches, comprising numerous bodies of Flemings and other foreigners, who held their establishments by military tenure.

While the fortress was thus secure from hostile violence, the life of it inmates was so unvaried and simple as might have excused youth and beauty for wishing for variety, even at the expense of some danger. The labours of the needle were only relieved by a walk round the battlements, where Eveline, as she passed arm in arm with Rose, received a military salute from each sentinel in turn, or in the courtyard, where the caps and bonnets of the domestics paid her the same respect which she received above from the pikes and javelins of the warders. Did they wish to extend their airing beyond the castle gate, it was not sufficient that doors and bridges were to be opened and lowered; there was, besides, an escort to get under arms, who, on foot or horseback as the case might require, attended for the security of the Lady Eveline's person. Without this military attendance they could not in safety move even so far as the mills, where honest Wilkin Flammock, his warlike deeds forgotten, was occupied with his mechanical labours. But if a further disport was intended, and the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse proposed to hunt or hawk for a few hours, her safety was not confided to a guard so feeble as the garrison of the castle could afford. It was necessary that Raoul should announce her purpose to Damian by a special messenger despatched the evening before, that there might be time before daybreak to scour, with a body of light cavalry, the region in which she intended to take her pleasure; and sentinels were placed in all suspicious places while she continued in the field. In truth, she tried, upon one or two occasions, to make an excursion without any formal annunciation of her intention; but all her purposes seemed to be known to Damian as soon as they were formed, and she was no sooner abroad than parties of archers and spearmen from his camp were seen scouring the valleys and guarding the mountain-pass, and Damian's own plume was usually beheld conspicuous among the distant soldiers.

The formality of these preparations so much allayed the pleasure derived from the sport, that Eveline seldom resorted to amusement which was attended with such bustle, and put in motion so many persons.

The day being worn out as it best might, in the evening

Father Aldrovand was wont to read out of some holy legend, or from the homilies of some departed saint, such passages as he deemed fit for the hearing of his little congregation. Sometimes also he read and expounded a chapter of the Holy Scripture; but in such cases, the good man's attention was so strangely turned to the military part of the Jewish history, that he was never able to quit the books of Judges and of Kings, together with the triumphs of Judas Maccabæus; although the manner in which he illustrated the victories of the children of Israel was much more amusing to himself than edifying to his female audience.

Sometimes, but rarely, Rose obtained permission for a strolling minstrel to entertain an hour with his ditty of love and chivalry; sometimes a pilgrim from a distant shrine repaid by long tales of the wonders which he had seen in other lands the hospitality which the Garde Doloureuse afforded; and sometimes also it happened that the interest and intercession of the tiring-woman obtained admission for travelling merchants, or pedlars, who, at the risk of their lives, found profit by carrying from castle to castle the materials of rich dresses and female ornaments.

The usual visits of mendicants, of jugglers, of travelling jesters, are not to be forgotten in this list of amusements; and though his nation subjected him to close watch and observation, even the Welsh bard, with his huge harp strung with horse-hair, was sometimes admitted to vary the uniformity of their secluded life. But, saving such amusements, and saving also the regular attendance upon the religious duties at the chapel, it was impossible for life to glide away in more wearisome monotony than at the castle of the Garde Doloureuse. Since the death of its brave owner, to whom feasting and hospitality seemed as natural as thoughts of honour and deeds of chivalry, the gloom of a convent might be said to have enveloped the ancient mansion of Raymond Berenger, were it not that the presence of so many armed warders, stalking in solemn state on the battlements, gave it rather the aspect of a state-prison; and the temper of the inhabitants gradually became infected by the character of their dwelling.

The spirits of Eveline in particular felt a depression which her naturally lively temper was quite inadequate to resist, and as her ruminations became graver, had caught that calm and contemplative manner which is so often united with an ardent and enthusiastical temperament. She meditated deeply upon the

former accidents of her life; nor can it be wondered that her thoughts repeatedly wandered back to the two several periods on which she had witnessed, or supposed that she had witnessed, a supernatural appearance. Then it was that it often seemed to her as if a good and evil power strove for mastery over her destiny.

Solitude is favourable to feelings of self-importance; and it is when alone, and occupied only with their own thoughts, that fanatics have reveries, and imagined saints lose themselves in imaginary ecstasies. With Eveline the influence of enthusiasm went not such a length, yet it seemed to her as if in the vision of the night she saw sometimes the aspect of the Lady of the Garde Doloureuse, bending upon her glances of pity, comfort, and protection; sometimes the ominous form of the Saxon castle of Baldringham, holding up the bloody hand as witness of the injuries with which she had been treated while in life, and menacing with revenge the descendant of her murderer.

On awaking from such dreams, Eveline would reflect that she was the last branch of her house — a house to which the tutelage and protection of the miraculous image, and the enmity and evil influence of the revengeful Vanda, had been peculiarly attached for ages. It seemed to her as if she were the prize for the disposal of which the benign saint and vindictive fiend were now to play their last and keenest game.

Thus thinking, and experiencing little interruption of her meditations from any external circumstance of interest and amusement, she became pensive, absent, wrapt herself up in contemplations which withdrew her attention from the conversation around her, and walked in the world of reality like one who is still in a dream. When she thought of her engagement with the Constable of Chester, it was with resignation, but without a wish, and almost without an expectation, that she would be called upon to fulfil it. She had accomplished her vow by accepting the faith of her deliverer in exchange for her own; and although she held herself willing to redeem the pledge — nay, would scarce confess to herself the reluctance with which she thought of doing so — yet it is certain that she entertained unavowed hopes that Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse would not be a severe creditor; but, satisfied with the readiness she had shown to accomplish her vow, would not insist upon her claim in its full rigour. It would have been the blackest ingratitude to have wished that her gallant deliverer, whom she had so much cause to pray for, should experience any of those

fatalities which in the Holy Land so often changed the laurel wreath into cypress; but other accidents chanced, when men had been long abroad, to alter those purposes with which they had left home.

A strolling minstrel, who sought the Garde Doloureuse, had recited, for the amusement of the lady and household, the celebrated lay of the Count of Gleichen, who, already married in his own country, laid himself under so many obligations in the East to a Saracen princess, through whose means he achieved his freedom, that he married her also. The Pope and his conclave were pleased to approve of the double wedlock in a case so extraordinary; and the good Count of Gleichen shared his nuptial bed between two wives of equal rank, and now sleeps between them under the same monument.

The commentaries of the inmates of the castle had been various and discrepant upon this legend. Father Aldrovand considered it as altogether false, and an unworthy calumny on the head of the church, in affirming his Holiness would countenance such irregularity. Old Margery, with the tenderheartedness of an ancient nurse, wept bitterly for pity during the tale, and, never questioning either the power of the Pope or the propriety of his decision, was pleased that a mode of extrication was found for a complication of love distresses which seemed almost inextricable. Dame Gillian declared it unreasonable that, since a woman was only allowed one husband, a man should, under any circumstances, be permitted to have two wives; whilst Raoul, glancing towards her a look of verjuice, pitied the deplorable idiocy of the man who could be fool enough to avail himself of such a privilege.

'Peace, all the rest of you,' said the Lady Eveline; 'and do you, my dear Rose, tell me your judgment upon this Count of Gleichen and his two wives.'

Rose blushed, and replied, 'She was not much accustomed to think of such matters; but that, in her apprehension, the wife who could be contented with but one half of her husband's affections had never deserved to engage the slightest share of them.'

'Thou art partly right, Rose,' said Eveline; 'and methinks the European lady, when she found herself outshone by the young and beautiful foreign princess, would have best consulted her own dignity in resigning the place, and giving the Holy Father no more trouble than in annulling the marriage, as has been done in cases of more frequent occurrence.'

This she said with an air of indifference, and even gaiety, which intimated to her faithful attendant with how little effort she herself could have made such a sacrifice, and served to indicate the state of her affections towards the Constable. But there was another than the Constable on whom her thoughts turned more frequently, though involuntarily, than perhaps in prudence they should have done.

The recollections of Damian de Lacy had not been erased from Eveline's mind. They were, indeed, renewed by hearing his name so often mentioned, and by knowing that he was almost constantly in the neighbourhood, with his whole attention fixed upon her convenience, interest, and safety; whilst, on the other hand, so far from waiting on her in person, he never even attempted, by a direct communication with herself, to consult her pleasure, even upon what most concerned her.

The messages conveyed by Father Aldrovand or by Rose to Amelot, Damian's page, while they gave an air of formality to their intercourse which Eveline thought unnecessary, and even unkind, yet served to fix her attention upon the connexion between them, and to keep it ever present to her memory. The remark by which Rose had vindicated the distance observed by her youthful guardian sometimes arose to her recollection; and while her soul repelled with scorn the suspicion that, in any case, his presence, whether at intervals or constantly, could be prejudicial to his uncle's interest, she conjured up various arguments for giving him a frequent place in her memory. Was it not her duty to think of Damian often and kindly, as the Constable's nearest, best beloved, and most trusted relative? Was he not her former deliverer and her present guardian? And might he not be considered as an instrument specially employed by her divine patroness in rendering effectual the protection with which she had graced her in more than one emergency?

Eveline's mind mutinied against the restrictions which were laid on their intercourse, as against something which inferred suspicion and degradation, like the compelled seclusion to which she had heard the paynim infidels of the East subjected their females. Why should she see her guardian only in the benefits which he conferred upon her and the cares he took for her safety, and hear his sentiments only by the mouth of others, as if one of them had been infected with the plague, or some other fatal or infectious disorder, which might render their meeting dangerous to the other? And if they did meet

occasionally, what else could be the consequence, save that the care of a brother towards a sister, of a trusty and kind guardian to the betrothed bride of his near relative and honoured patron, might render the melancholy seclusion of the Garde Doloureuse more easy to be endured by one so young in years, and, though dejected by present circumstances, naturally so gay in temper?

Yet, though this train of reasoning appeared to Eveline, when tracing it in her own mind, so conclusive that she several times resolved to communicate her view of the case to Rose Flammock, it so chanced that, whenever she looked on the calm, steady blue eye of the Flemish maiden, and remembered that her unblemished faith was mixed with a sincerity and plain dealing proof against every consideration, she feared lest she might be subjected in the opinion of her attendant to suspicions from which her own mind freed her; and her proud Norman spirit revolted at the idea of being obliged to justify herself to another, when she stood self-acquitted to her own mind. 'Let things be as they are,' she said, 'and let us endure all the weariness of a life which might be so easily rendered more cheerful, rather than that this zealous but punctilious friend should, in the strictness and nicety of her feelings on my account, conceive me capable of encouraging an intercourse which could lead to a less worthy thought of me in the mind of the most scrupulous of man — or of womankind.' But even this vacillation of opinion and resolution tended to bring the image of the handsome young Damian more frequently before the Lady Eveline's fancy than perhaps his uncle, had he known it, would altogether have approved of. In such reflections, however, she never indulged long ere a sense of the singular destiny which had hitherto attended her led her back into the more melancholy contemplations from which the buoyancy of her youthful fancy had for a short time emancipated her.

CHAPTER XXIII

Ours is the skie,
Where at what fowl we please our hawk shall flie.

RANDOLPH.

ONE bright September morning, old Raoul was busy in the mews where he kept his hawks, grumbling all the while to himself as he surveyed the condition of each bird, and blaming alternately the carelessness of the under-falconer, and the situation of the building, and the weather, and the wind, and all things around him, for the dilapidation which time and disease had made in the neglected hawking establishment of the Garde Doloureuse. While in these unpleasing meditations, he was surprised by the voice of his beloved Dame Gillian, who seldom was an early riser, and yet more rarely visited him when he was in his sphere of peculiar authority. 'Raoul — Raoul! where art thou, man? Ever to seek for, when thou canst make aught of advantage for thyself or me!'

'And what want'st thou, dame?' said Raoul — 'what means thy screaming worse than the sea-gull before wet weather? A murrain on thy voice! it is enough to fray every hawk from the perch.'

'Hawk!' answered Dame Gillian; 'it is time to be looking for hawks, when here is a cast of the bravest falcons come hither for sale that ever flew by lake, brook, or meadow!'

'Kites! like her that brings the news,' said Raoul.

'No, nor kestrels like him that hears it,' replied Gillian; 'but brave jerfalcons, with large nares, strongly armed, and beaks short and something bluish ——'

'Pshaw, with thy jargon! Where came they from?' said Raoul, interested in the tidings, but unwilling to give his wife the satisfaction of seeing that he was so.

'From the Isle of Man,' replied Gillian.

'They must be good, then, though it was a woman brought tidings of them,' said Raoul, smiling grimly at his own wit;

then, leaving the mews, he demanded to know where this famous falcon-merchant was to be met withal.

'Why, between the barriers and the inner gate,' replied Gillian, 'where other men are admitted that have wares to utter. Where should he be?'

'And who let him in?' demanded the suspicious Raoul.

'Why, master steward, thou owl!' said Gillian; 'he came but now to my chamber, and sent me hither to call you.'

'Oh, the steward — the steward, I might have guessed as much. And he came to thy chamber, doubtless, because he could not have as easily come hither to me himself. Was it not so, sweetheart?'

'I do not know why he chose to come to me rather than to you, Raoul,' said Gillian; 'and if I did know, perhaps I would not tell you. Go to, miss your bargain or make your bargain, I care not which; the man will not wait for you: he has good proffers from the seneschal of Malpas and the Welsh Lord of Dinevawr.'

'I come — I come,' said Raoul, who felt the necessity of embracing this opportunity of improving his hawking establishment, and hastened to the gate, where he met the merchant, attended by a servant, who kept in separate cages the three falcons which he offered for sale.

The first glance satisfied Raoul that they were of the best breed in Europe, and that, if their education were in correspondence to their race, there could scarce be a more valuable addition even to a royal mews. The merchant did not fail to enlarge upon all their points of excellence — the breadth of their shoulders, the strength of their train, their full and fierce dark eyes, the boldness with which they endured the approach of strangers, and the lively spirit and vigour with which they pruned their plumes, and shook, or, as it was technically termed, roused themselves. He expatiated on the difficulty and danger with which they were obtained from the Rock of Ramsey, on which they were bred, and which was an eyrie unrivalled even on the coast of Norway.

Raoul turned apparently a deaf ear to all these commendations. 'Friend merchant,' said he, 'I know a falcon as well as thou dost, and I will not deny that thine are fine ones; but if they be not carefully trained and reclaimed, I would rather have a goss-hawk on my perch than the fairest falcon that ever stretched wing to weather.'

'I grant ye,' said the merchant; 'but if we agree on the

price, for that is the main matter, thou shalt see the birds fly if thou wilt, and then buy them or not as thou likest. I am no true merchant if thou ever saw'st birds beat them, whether at the mount or the stoop.'

'That I call fair,' said Raoul, 'if the price be equally so.'

'It shall be corresponding,' said the hawk-merchant; 'for I have brought six casts from the island, by the good favour of good King Reginald of Man, and I have sold every feather of them save these; and so, having emptied my cages and filled my purse, I desire not to be troubled longer with the residue; and if a good fellow, and a judge, as thou seemest to be, should like the hawks when he has seen them fly, he shall have the price of his own making.'

'Go to,' said Raoul, 'we will have no blind bargains; my lady, if the hawks be suitable, is more able to pay for them than thou to give them away. Will a bezant be a conformable price for the cast?'

'A bezant, master falconer! By my faith, you are no bold bodesman; nevertheless, double your offer, and I will consider it.'

'If the hawks are well reclaimed,' said Raoul, 'I will give you a bezant and a half; but I will see them strike a heron ere I will be so rash as deal with you.'

'It is well,' said the merchant, 'and I had better take your offer than be longer cumbered with them; for were I to carry them into Wales, I might get paid in a worse fashion by some of their long knives. Will you to horse presently?'

'Assuredly,' said Raoul; 'and, though March be the fitter month for hawking at the heron, yet I will show you one of these frog-peckers for the trouble of riding the matter of a mile by the water-side.'

'Content, sir falconer,' said the merchant. 'But are we to go alone, or is there no lord or lady in the castle who would take pleasure to see a piece of game gallantly struck? I am not afraid to show these hawks to a countess.'

'My lady used to love the sport well enough,' said Raoul, 'but, I wot not why, she is moped and mazed ever since her father's death, and lives in her fair castle like a nun in a cloister, without disport or revelry of any kind. Nevertheless, Gillian, thou canst do something with her; good now, do a kind deed for once, and move her to come out and look on this morning's sport. The poor heart hath seen no pastime this summer.'

'That I will do,' quoth Gillian; 'and, moreover, I will show her such a new riding-tire for the head, that no woman born could ever look at without the wish to toss it a little in the wind.'

As Gillian spoke, it appeared to her jealous-pated husband that he surprised a glance of more intelligence exchanged betwixt her and the trader than brief acquaintance seemed to warrant, even when allowance was made for the extreme frankness of Dame Gillian's disposition. He thought also that, on looking more closely at the merchant, his lineaments were not totally unknown to him; and proceeded to say to him drily, 'We have met before, friend, but I cannot call to remembrance where.'

'Like enough,' said the merchant: 'I have used this country often, and may have taken money of you in the way of trade. If I were in fitting place, I would gladly bestow a pottle of wine to our better acquaintance.'

'Not so fast, friend,' said the old huntsman; 'ere I drink to better acquaintance with any one, I must be well pleased with what I already know of him. We will see thy hawks fly, and if their breeding match thy bragging, we may perhaps crush a cup together. And here come grooms and equerries, in faith: my lady has consented to come forth.'

The opportunity of seeing this rural pastime had offered itself to Eveline, at a time when the delightful brilliancy of the day, the temperance of the air, and the joyous work of harvest, proceeding in every direction around, made the temptation to exercise almost irresistible.

As they proposed to go no farther than the side of the neighbouring river, near the fatal bridge, over which a small guard of infantry was constantly maintained, Eveline dispensed with any farther escort, and, contrary to the custom of the castle, took no one in her train save Rose and Gillian, and one or two servants, who led spaniels or carried appurtenances of the chase. Raoul, the merchant, and an equerry attended her, of course, each holding a hawk on his wrist, and anxiously adjusting the mode in which they should throw them off, so as best to ascertain the extent of their powers and training.

When these important points had been adjusted, the party rode down the river, carefully looking on every side for the object of their game; but no heron was seen stalking on the usual haunts of the bird, although there was a heronry at no great distance.

Few disappointments of a small nature are more teazing than that of a sportsman who, having set out with all means and appliances for destruction of game, finds that there is none to be met with; because he conceives himself, with his full shooting trim and his empty game-pouch, to be subjected to the sneer of every passing rustic. The party of the Lady Eveline felt all the degradation of such disappointment.

'A fair country this,' said the merchant, 'where, on two miles of river, you cannot find one poor heron!'

'It is the clatter those d—d Flemings make with their water-mills and fulling-mills,' said Raoul: 'they destroy good sport and good company wherever they come. But were my lady willing to ride a mile or so farther to the Red Pool, I could show you a long-shanked fellow who would make your hawks cancelier till their brains were giddy.'

'The Red Pool!' said Rose; 'thou knowest it is more than three miles beyond the bridge, and lies up towards the hills.'

'Ay — ay,' said Raoul, 'another Flemish freak to spoil pastime! They are not so scarce on the marches these Flemish wenches, that they should fear being hawked at by Welsh haggards.'

'Raoul is right, Rose,' answered Eveline: 'it is absurd to be cooped up like birds in a cage, when all around us has been so uniformly quiet. I am determined to break out of bounds for once, and see sport in our old fashion, without being surrounded with armed men like prisoners of state. We will merrily to the Red Pool, wench, and kill a heron like free maids of the marches.'

'Let me but tell my father, at least, to mount and follow us,' said Rose; for they were now near the re-established manufacturing-houses of the stout Fleming.

'I care not if thou dost, Rose,' said Eveline; 'yet credit me, girl, we will be at the Red Pool, and thus far on our way home again, ere thy father has donned his best doublet, girded on his two-handed sword, and accoutred his strong Flanderkin elephant of a horse, which he judiciously names Sloth — nay, frown not, and lose not, in justifying thy father, the time that may be better spent in calling him out.'

Rose rode to the mills accordingly, when Wilkin Flammock, at the command of his liege mistress, readily hastened to get his steel cap and habergeon, and ordered half a dozen of his kinsmen and servants to get on horseback. Rose remained with him, to urge him to more despatch than his methodical

disposition rendered natural to him; but, in spite of all her efforts to stimulate him, the Lady Eveline had passed the bridge more than half an hour ere her escort was prepared to follow her.

Meanwhile, apprehensive of no evil, and riding gaily on, with the sensation of one escaped from confinement, Eveline moved forward on her lively jennet, as light as a lark; the plumes with which Dame Gillian had decked her riding-bonnet dancing in the wind, and her attendants galloping behind her, with dogs, pouches, lines, and all other appurtenances of the royal sport of hawking. After passing the river, the wild greensward path which they pursued began to wind upward among small eminences, sometimes bare and craggy, sometimes overgrown with hazel, sloe-thorn, and other dwarf shrubs, and at length, suddenly descending, brought them to the verge of a mountain rivulet, that, like a lamb at play, leapt merrily from rock to rock, seemingly uncertain which way to run.

'This little stream was always my favourite, Dame Gillian,' said Eveline, 'and now methinks it leaps the lighter that it sees me again.'

'Ah! lady,' said Dame Gillian, whose turn for conversation never extended in such cases beyond a few phrases of gross flattery, 'many a fair knight would leap shoulder-height for leave to look on you as free as the brook may! more especially now that you have donned that riding-cap, which, in exquisite delicacy of invention, methinks is a bowshot before aught that I ever invented. What thinkest thou, Raoul?'

'I think,' answered her well-natured helpmate, 'that women's tongues were contrived to drive all the game out of the country. Here we come near to the spot where we hope to speed, or nowhere; wherefore, pray, my sweet lady, be silent yourself, and keep your followers as much so as their natures will permit, while we steal along the bank of the pool, under the wind, with our hawks' hoods cast loose, all ready for a flight.'

As he spoke, they advanced about a hundred yards up the brawling stream, until the little vale through which it flowed, making a very sudden turn to one side, showed them the Red Pool, the superfluous water of which formed the rivulet itself.

This mountain-lake, or tarn, as it is called in some countries, was a deep basin of about a mile in circumference, but rather oblong than circular. On the side next to our falconers arose a ridge of rock, of a dark red hue, giving name to the pool, which, reflecting this massive and dusky barrier, appeared to partake

of its colour. On the opposite side was a heathy hill, whose autumnal bloom had not yet faded from purple to russet; its surface was varied by the dark green furze and the fern, and in many places grey cliffs, or loose stones of the same colour, formed a contrast to the ruddy precipice to which they lay opposed. A natural road of beautiful sand was formed by a beach, which, extending all the way around the lake, separated its waters from the precipitous rock on the one hand, and on the other from the steep and broken hill; and being nowhere less than five or six yards in breadth, and in most places greatly more, offered around its whole circuit a tempting opportunity to the rider who desired to exercise and breathe the horse on which he was mounted. The verge of the pool on the rocky side was here and there strewed with fragments of large size, detached from the precipice above, but not in such quantity as to encumber this pleasant horse-course. Many of these rocky masses, having passed the margin of the water in their fall, lay immersed there like small islets; and, placed amongst a little archipelago, the quick eye of Raoul detected the heron which they were in search of.

A moment's consultation was held to consider in what manner they should approach the sad and solitary bird, which, unconscious that itself was the object of a formidable ambuscade, stood motionless on a stone by the brink of the lake, watching for such small fish or water-reptiles as might chance to pass by its lonely station. A brief debate took place betwixt Raoul and the hawk-merchant on the best mode of starting the quarry, so as to allow Lady Eveline and her attendants the most perfect view of the flight. The facility of killing the heron at the *far jetée* or at the *jetée ferré* — that is, upon the hither or farther side of the pool — was anxiously debated in language of breathless importance, as if some great and perilous enterprise was about to be executed.

At length the arrangements were fixed, and the party began to advance towards the aquatic hermit, who, by this time aware of their approach, drew himself up to his full height, erected his long lean neck, spread his broad fan-like wings, uttered his usual clanging cry, and, projecting his length of thin legs far behind him, rose upon the gentle breeze. It was then, with a loud whoop of encouragement, that the merchant threw off the noble hawk he bore, having first unhooded her to give her a view of her quarry.

Eager as a frigate in chase of some rich galleon darted the

falcon towards the enemy which she had been taught to pursue; while, preparing for defence, if he should be unable to escape by flight, the heron exerted all his powers of speed to escape from an enemy so formidable. Plying his almost unequalled strength of wing, he ascended high and higher in the air, by short gyrations, that the hawk might gain no vantage-ground for pouncing at him; while his spiked beak, at the extremity of so long a neck as enabled him to strike an object at a yard's distance in every direction, possessed for any less spirited assailant all the terrors of a Moorish javelin.

Another hawk was now thrown off, and encouraged by the halloos of the falconer to join her companion. Both kept mounting, or scaling the air, as it were, by a succession of small circles, endeavouring to gain that superior height which the heron on his part was bent to preserve; and, to the exquisite delight of the spectators, the contest was continued until all three were wellnigh mingled with the fleecy clouds, from which was occasionally heard the harsh and plaintive cry of the quarry, appealing as it were to the heaven which he was approaching against the wanton cruelty of those by whom he was persecuted.

At length one of the falcons had reached a pitch from which she ventured to stoop at the heron; but so judiciously did the quarry maintain his defence, as to receive on his beak the stroke which the falcon, shooting down at full descent, had made against his right wing; so that one of his enemies, spiked through the body by his own weight, fell fluttering into the lake, very near the land, on the side farthest from the falconers, and perished there.

'There goes a gallant falcon to the fishes,' said Raoul. 'Merchant, thy cake is dough.'

Even as he spoke, however, the remaining bird had avenged the fate of her sister; for the success which the heron met with on one side did not prevent his being assailed on the other wing; and the falcon stooping boldly, and grappling with, or, as it is called in falconry, 'binding,' his prey, both came tumbling down together, from a great height in the air. It was then no small object on the part of the falconers to come in as soon as possible, lest the falcon should receive hurt from the beak or talons of the heron; and the whole party, the men setting spurs and the females switching their palfreys, went off like the wind, sweeping along the fair and smooth beach betwixt the rock and the water.

Lady Eveline, far better mounted than any of her train, her spirits elated by the sport and by the speed at which she moved, was much sooner than any of her attendants at the spot where the falcon and heron, still engaged in their mortal struggle, lay fighting upon the moss, the wing of the latter having been broken by the stoop of the former. The duty of a falconer in such a crisis was to rush in and assist the hawk, by thrusting the heron's bill into the earth and breaking his legs, and thus permitting the falcon to despatch him on easy terms.

Neither would the sex nor quality of the Lady Eveline have excused her becoming second to the falcon in this cruel manner; but, just as she had dismounted for that purpose, she was surprised to find herself seized on by a wild form, who exclaimed in Welsh that he seized her as a waif, for hawking on the demesnes of Dawfyd with the One Eye. At the same time many other Welshmen, to the number of more than a score, showed themselves from behind crags and bushes, all armed at point with the axes called Welsh hooks, long knives, darts, and bows and arrows.

Eveline screamed to her attendants for assistance, and at the same time made use of what Welsh phrases she possessed, to move the fears or excite the compassion of the outlawed mountaineers; for she doubted not that she had fallen under the power of such a party. When she found her requests were unheeded, and she perceived it was their purpose to detain her prisoner, she disdained to use farther entreaties; but demanded at their peril that they should treat her with respect, promising in that case that she would pay them a large ransom, and threatening them with the vengeance of the Lords Marchers, and particularly of Sir Damian de Lacy, if they ventured to use her otherwise.

The men seemed to understand her, and although they proceeded to tie a bandage over her eyes, and to bind her arms with her own veil, yet they observed in these acts of violence a certain delicacy and attention both to her feelings and her safety which led her to hope that her request had had some effect on them. They secured her to the saddle of her palfrey, and led her away with them through the recesses of the hills; while she had the additional distress to hear behind her the noise of a conflict, occasioned by the fruitless efforts of her retinue to procure her rescue.

Astonishment had at first seized the hawking-party, when

they saw from some distance their sport interrupted by a violent assault on their mistress. Old Raoul valiantly put spurs to his horse, and, calling on the rest to follow him to the rescue, rode furiously towards the banditti; but, having no other arms save a hawking-pole and short sword, he and those who followed him in his meritorious but ineffectual attempt were easily foiled, and Raoul and one or two of the foremost severely beaten; the banditti exercising upon them their own poles till they were broken to splinters, but generously abstaining from the use of more dangerous weapons. The rest of the retinue, completely discouraged, dispersed to give the alarm, and the merchant and Dame Gillian remained by the lake, filling the air with shrieks of useless fear and sorrow. The outlaws, meanwhile, drawing together in a body, shot a few arrows at the fugitives, but more to alarm than to injure them, and then marched off, as if to cover their companions who had gone before with the Lady Eveline in their custody.

CHAPTER XXIV

Four ruffians seized me yester morn —
Alas! a maiden most forlorn!
They choked my cries with wicked might,
And bound me on a palfrey white.

COLERIDGE.

SUCH adventures as are now only recorded in works of mere fiction were not uncommon in the feudal ages, when might was so universally superior to right; and it followed that those whose condition exposed them to frequent violence were more prompt in repelling, and more patient in enduring, it than could otherwise have been expected from their sex and age.

The Lady Eveline felt that she was a prisoner, nor was she devoid of fears concerning the purpose of this assault; but she suffered neither her alarm nor the violence with which she was hurried along to deprive her of the power of observing and reflecting. From the noise of hoofs which now increased around, she concluded that the greater part of the ruffians by whom she had been seized had betaken themselves to their horses. This she knew was consonant to the practice of the Welsh marauders, who, although the small size and slightness of their nags made them totally unfit for service in battle, availed themselves of their activity and sureness of foot to transport them with the necessary celerity to and from the scenes of their rapine, ensuring thus a rapid and unperceived approach, and a secure and speedy retreat. These animals traversed without difficulty, and beneath the load of a heavy soldier, the wild mountain-paths by which the country was intersected, and in one of which Lady Eveline Berenger concluded she was now engaged, from the manner in which her own palfrey, supported by a man on foot at either rein, seemed now to labour up some precipice, and anon to descend with still greater risk on the other side.

At one of those moments, a voice which she had not yet distinguished addressed her in the Anglo-Norman language, and asked, with apparent interest, if she sat safely on her saddle, offering at the same time to have her accoutrements altered at her pleasure and convenience.

'Insult not my condition with the mention of safety,' said Eveline; 'you may well believe that I hold my safety altogether irreconcilable with these deeds of violence. If I or my vassals have done injury to any of the Cymry, let me know, and it shall be amended. If it is ransom which you desire, name the sum, and I will send an order to treat for it; but detain me not prisoner, for that can but injure me, and will avail you nothing.'

'The Lady Eveline,' answered the voice, still in a tone of courtesy inconsistent with the violence which she sustained, 'will speedily find that our actions are more rough than our purposes.'

'If you know who I am,' said Eveline, 'you cannot doubt that this atrocity will be avenged; you must know by whose banner my lands are at present protected.'

'Under De Lacy's,' answered the voice, with a tone of indifference. 'Be it so — falcons fear not falcons.'

At this moment there was a halt, and a confused murmur arose amongst those around her, who had hitherto been silent, unless when muttering to each other in Welsh, and as briefly as possible, directions which way to hold, or encouragement to use haste.

These murmurs ceased, and there was a pause of several minutes; at length Eveline again heard the voice which formerly addressed her, giving directions which she could not understand. He then spoke to herself. 'You will presently see,' he said, 'whether I have spoken truly when I said I scorned the ties by which you are fettered. But you are at once the cause of strife and the reward of victory, your safety must be cared for as time will admit; and, strange as the mode of protection is to which we are to commit you, I trust the victor in the approaching struggle will find you uninjured.'

'Do not, for the sake of the Blessed Virgin, let there be strife and bloodshed!' said Eveline; 'rather unbind my eyes, and let me speak to those whose approach you dread. If friends, as it would seem to me, I will be the means of peace between you.'

'I despise peace,' replied the speaker. 'I have not undertaken a resolute and daring adventure, to resign it as a child

doth his plaything, at the first frown of fortune. Please to alight, noble lady; or rather be not offended that I thus lift you from the seat and place you on the greensward.'

As he spoke, Eveline felt herself lifted from her palfrey, and placed carefully and safely on the ground, in a sitting posture. A moment after, the same peremptory valet who had aided her to dismount disrobed her of her cap, the masterpiece of Dame Gillian, and of her upper mantle. 'I must yet further require you,' said the bandit leader, 'to creep on hands and knees into this narrow aperture. Believe me, I regret the nature of the singular fortification to which I commit your person for safety.'

Eveline crept forwards as directed, conceiving resistance to be of no avail, and thinking that compliance with the request of one who spoke like a person of consequence might find her protection against the unbridled fury of the Welsh, to whom she was obnoxious, as being the cause of Gwenwyn's death and the defeat of the Britons under the walls of the Garde Doloureuse.

She crept then forwards through a narrow and damp passage, built on either side with rough stones, and so low that she could not have entered it in any other posture. When she had proceeded about two or three yards, the passage opened into a concavity or apartment, high enough to permit her to sit at her ease, and of irregular, but narrow, dimensions. At the same time she became sensible, from the noise which she heard behind her, that the ruffians were stopping up the passage by which she had been thus introduced into the bowels of the earth. She could distinctly hear the clattering of stone with which they closed the entrance, and she became sensible that the current of fresh air which had rushed through the opening was gradually failing, and that the atmosphere of the subterranean apartment became yet more damp, earthy, and oppressive than at first.

At this moment came a distant sound from without, in which Eveline thought she could distinguish cries, blows, the trampling of horse, the oaths, shouts, and screams of the combatants, but all deadened by the rude walls of her prison into a confused, hollow murmur, conveying such intelligence to her ears as we may suppose the dead to hear from the world they have quitted.

Influenced by desperation, under circumstances so dreadful, Eveline struggled for liberty with such frantic energy that she

partly effected her purpose by forcing her arms from the bonds which confined them. But this only convinced her of the impossibility to escape; for, rending off the veil which wrapt her head, she found herself in total darkness, and flinging her arms hastily around her, she discovered she was cooped up in a subterranean cavern of very narrow dimensions. Her hands, which groped around, encountered only pieces of decayed metal, and a substance which, at another moment, would have made her shudder. being, in truth, the mouldering bones of the dead. At present, not even this circumstance could add to her fears, immured as she seemed to be, to perish by a strange and subterranean death, while her friends and deliverers were probably within a few yards of her. She flung her arms wildly around in search of some avenue of escape, but every effort she made for liberating herself from the ponderous circumvallation was as ineffectual as if directed against the dome of a cathedral.

The noise by which her ears were at first assailed increased rapidly, and at one moment it seemed as if the covering of the vault under which she lay sounded repeatedly to blows, or the shock of substances which had fallen, or been thrown, against it. It was impossible that a human brain could have withstood these terrors, operating upon it so immediately; but happily this extremity lasted not long. Sounds, more hollow and dying away in distance argued that one or other of the parties had retreated; and at length all was silent.

Eveline was now left to the undisturbed contemplation of her own disastrous situation. The fight was over, and, as circumstances led her to infer, her own friends were conquerors; for otherwise the victor would have relieved her from her place of confinement, and carried her away captive with him, as his words had menaced. But what could the success of her faithful friends and followers avail Eveline, who pent up under a place of concealment which, whatever was its character, must have escaped the observation, was left on the field of battle, to become again the prize of the enemy, should their band venture to return, or die in darkness and privation, a death as horrid as ever tyrant invented or martyr underwent, and which the unfortunate young lady could not even bear to think of without a prayer that her agony might at least be shortened.

In this hour of dread she recollected the poniard which she wore, and the dark thought crossed her mind that, when life became hopeless, a speedy death was at least within her reach. As her soul shuddered at so dreadful an alternative, the que

suddenly occurred, might not this weapon be put to a more hallowed use, and aid her emancipation instead of abridging her sufferings?

This hope once adopted, the daughter of Raymond Berenger hastened to prove the experiment, and by repeated efforts succeeded, though with difficulty, in changing her posture, so as to admit of her inspecting her place of confinement all around, but particularly the passage by which she had entered, and by which she now attempted again to return to the light of day. She crept to the extremity, and found it, as she expected, strongly blocked up with large stones and earth, rammed together in such a manner as nearly to extinguish all hope of escape. The work, however, had been hastily performed, and life and liberty were prizes to stimulate exertion. With her poniard she cleared away the earth and sods; with her hands, little accustomed to such labour, she removed several stones, and advanced in her task so far as to obtain a glimmering of light, and, what was scarce less precious, a supply of purer air. But, at the same time, she had the misfortune to ascertain that, from the size and massiveness of a huge stone which closed the extremity of the passage, there was no hope that her unassisted strength could effect her extrication. Yet her condition was improved by the admission of air and light, as well as by the opportunity afforded of calling out for assistance.

Such cries, indeed, were for some time uttered in vain; the field had probably been left to the dead and the dying, for low and indistinct groans were the only answer which she received for several minutes. At length, as she repeated her exclamation, a voice, faint as that of one just awakened from a swoon, pronounced these words in answer: 'Edris of the Earthen House, dost thou call from thy tomb to the wretch who just hastens to his own? Are the boundaries broken down which connect me with the living? And do I already hear, with fleshly ears, the faint and screaming accents of the dead?'

'It is no spirit who speaks,' replied Eveline, overjoyed at finding she could at least communicate her existence to a living person — 'no spirit, but a most unhappy maiden, Eveline Berenger by name, immured beneath this dark vault, and in danger to perish horribly, unless God send me rescue!'

'Eveline Berenger!' exclaimed he whom she addressed, in the accents of wonder. 'It is impossible! I watched her green mantle — I watched her plumy bonnet, as I saw her hurried

from the field, and felt my own inability to follow to the rescue; nor did force or exertion altogether leave me till the waving of the robe and the dancing of the feathers were lost to my eyes, and all hope of rescuing her abandoned my heart.'

'Faithful vassal, or right true friend, or courteous stranger, whichsoever I may name thee,' answered Eveline, 'know thou hast been abused by the artifices of these Welsh banditti: the mantle and head-gear of Eveline Berenger they have indeed with them, and may have used them to mislead those true friends who, like thee, are anxious for my fate. Wherefore, brave sir, devise some succour, if thou canst, for thyself and me; since I dread that these ruffians, when they shall have escaped immediate pursuit, will return hither, like the robber to the hoard where he has deposited his stolen booty.'

'Now, the Holy Virgin be praised,' said the wounded man, 'that I can spend the last breath of my life in thy just and honourable service! I would not before blow my bugle, lest I recalled from the pursuit to the aid of my worthless self some of those who might be effectually engaged in thy rescue; may Heaven grant that the recall may now be heard, that my eyes may yet see the Lady Eveline in safety and liberty!'

The words, though spoken in a feeble tone, breathed a spirit of enthusiasm, and were followed by the blast of a horn, faintly winded, to which no answer was made save the echoing of the dell. A sharper and louder blast was then sent forth, but sunk so suddenly that it seemed the breath of him who sounded the instrument had failed in the effort. A strange thought crossed Eveline's mind even in that moment of uncertainty and terror. 'That,' she said, 'was the note of a De Lacy; surely you cannot be my gentle kinsman, Sir Damian?'

'I am that unhappy wretch, deserving of death for the evil care which I have taken of the treasure entrusted to me. What was my business to trust to reports and messengers? I should have worshipped the saint who was committed to my keeping with such vigilance as avarice bestows on the dross which he calls treasure. I should have rested nowhere, save at your gate; outwatched the brightest stars in the horizon; unseen and unknown myself, I should never have parted from your neighbourhood; then had you not been in the present danger, and — much less important consequence — thou, Damian de Lacy, had not filled the grave of a forsworn and negligent caitiff!'

'Alas! noble Damian,' said Eveline, 'break not my heart

by blaming yourself for an imprudence which is altogether my own. Thy succour was ever near when I intimated the least want of it; and it embitters my own misfortune to know that my rashness has been the cause of your disaster. Answer me, gentle kinsman, and give me to hope that the wounds you have suffered are such as may be cured. Alas! how much of your blood have I seen spilled, and what a fate is mine, that I should ever bring distress on all for whom I would most willingly sacrifice my own happiness! But do not let us embitter the moments given us in mercy by fruitless repinings. Try what you can to stop thine ebbing blood, which is so dear to England — to Eveline — and to thine uncle.'

Damian groaned as she spoke, and was silent; while, maddened with the idea that he might be perishing for want of aid, Eveline repeated her efforts to extricate herself for her kinsman's assistance, as well as her own. It was all in vain, and she had ceased the attempt in despair, and, passing from one hideous subject of terror to another, she sat listening with sharpened ear for the dying groan of Damian, when — feeling of ecstasy! — the ground was shaken with horses' feet advancing rapidly. Yet this joyful sound, if decisive of life, did not assure her of liberty. It might be the banditti of the mountains returning to seek their captive. Even then they would surely allow her leave to look upon and bind up the wounds of Damian de Lacy; for to keep him as a captive might vantage them more in many degrees than could his death. A horseman came up; Eveline invoked his assistance; and the first word she heard was an exclamation in Flemish from the faithful Wilkin Flammock, which nothing save some spectacle of the most unusual kind was ever known to compel from that phlegmatic person.

His presence, indeed, was particularly useful on this occasion; for, being informed by the Lady Eveline in what condition she was placed, and implored at the same time to look to the situation of Sir Damian de Lacy, he began, with admirable composure and some skill, to stop the wounds of the one, while his attendants collected levers, left by the Welsh as they retreated, and were soon ready to attempt the liberation of Eveline. With much caution, and under the experienced direction of Flammock, the stone was at length so much raised that the Lady Eveline was visible, to the delight of all, and especially of the faithful Rose, who, regardless of the risk of personal harm, fluttered around her mistress's place of confinement, like a bird robbed of her nestlings around the cage in which the

truant urchin has imprisoned them. Precaution was necessary to remove the stone, lest falling inwards it might do the lady injury.

At length the rocky fragment was so much displaced that she could issue forth; while her people, as in hatred of the coercion which she had sustained, ceased not to heave with bar and lever till, totally destroying the balance of the heavy mass, it turned over from the little flat on which it had been placed at the mouth of the subterranean entrance, and, acquiring force as it revolved down a steep declivity, was at length put into rapid motion, and rolled, crashed, and thundered down the hill, amid flashes of fire which it forced from the rocks, and clouds of smoke and dust, until it alighted in the channel of a brook, where it broke into several massive fragments, with a noise that might have been heard some miles off.

With garments rent and soiled through the violence she had sustained, with dishevelled hair and disordered dress, faint from the stifling effect of her confinement, and exhausted by the efforts she had made to relieve herself, Eveline did not, nevertheless, waste a single minute in considering her own condition; but, with the eagerness of a sister hastening to the assistance of her only brother, betook herself to examine the several severe wounds of Damian de Lacy, and to use proper means to stanch the blood and recall him from his swoon. We have said elsewhere that, like other ladies of the time, Eveline was not altogether unacquainted with the surgical art, and she now displayed a greater share of knowledge than she had been thought capable of exerting. There was prudence, foresight, and tenderness in every direction which she gave, and the softness of the female sex, with their officious humanity, ever ready to assist in alleviating human misery, seemed in her enhanced, and rendered dignified, by the sagacity of a strong and powerful understanding. After hearing with wonder for a minute or two the prudent and ready-witted directions of her mistress, Rose seemed at once to recollect that the patient should not be left to the exclusive care of the Lady Eveline, and joining, therefore, in the task, she rendered what assistance she could, while the attendants were employed in forming a litter, on which the wounded knight was to be conveyed to the castle of the Garde Doloureuse.

CHAPTER XXV

A merry place, 't is said, in days of yore ;
But something ails it now — the place is cursed.

WORDSWORTH.

THE place on which the skirmish had occurred, and the deliverance of the Lady Eveline had been effected, was a wild and singular spot, being a small level plain, forming a sort of stage, or resting-place, between two very rough paths, one of which winded up the rivulet from below, and another continued the ascent above. Being surrounded by hills and woods, it was a celebrated spot for finding game, and, in former days, a Welsh prince, renowned for his universal hospitality, his love of 'crw' and of the chase, had erected a forest-lodge, where he used to feast his friends and followers with a profusion unexampled in Cambria.

The fancy of the bards, always captivated with magnificence, and having no objections to the peculiar species of profusion practised by this potentate, gave him the surname of Edris of the Goblets, and celebrated him in their odes in terms as high as those which exalt the heroes of the famous Hirlas horn. The subject of their praises, however, fell finally a victim to his propensities, having been stabbed to the heart in one of those scenes of confusion and drunkenness which were frequently the conclusion of his renowned banquets. Shocked at this catastrophe, the assembled Britons interred the relics of the prince on the place where he had died, within the narrow vault where Eveline had been confined, and having barricaded the entrance of the sepulchre with fragments of rock, heaped over it an immense cairn, or pile of stones, on the summit of which they put the assassin to death. Superstition guarded the spot; and for many a year this memorial of Edris remained unviolated, although the lodge had gone to ruin, and its vestiges had totally decayed.

In latter years, some prowling band of Welsh robbers had

discovered the secret entrance, and opened it with the view of ransacking the tomb for arms and treasures, which were in ancient times often buried with the dead. These marauders were disappointed, and obtained nothing by the violation of the grave of Edris excepting the knowledge of a secret place, which might be used for depositing their booty, or even as a place of retreat for one of their number in a case of emergency.

When the followers of Damian, five or six in number, explained their part of the history of the day to Wilkin Flammock, it appeared that Damian had ordered them to horse at break of day, with a more considerable body, to act, as they understood, against a party of insurgent peasants, when of a sudden he had altered his mind, and, dividing his force into small bands, employed himself and them in reconnoitring more than one mountain-pass betwixt Wales and the marches of the English country, in the neighbourhood of the Garde Doloureuse.

This was an occupation so ordinary for him that it excited no particular notice. These manœuvres were frequently undertaken by the warlike marchers, for the purpose of intimidating the Welsh in general, more especially the bands of outlaws, who, independent of any regular government, infested those wild frontiers. Yet it escaped not comment that, in undertaking such service at this moment, Damian seemed to abandon that of dispersing the insurgents, which had been considered as the chief object of the day.

It was about noon when, falling in, as good fortune would have it, with one of the fugitive grooms, Damian and his immediate attendants received information of the violence committed on the Lady Eveline, and, by their perfect knowledge of the country, were able to intercept the ruffians at the Pass of Edris, as it was called, by which the Welsh rovers ordinarily returned to their strongholds in the interior. It is probable that the banditti were not aware of the small force which Damian headed in person, and at the same time knew that there would be an immediate and hot pursuit in their rear; and these circumstances led their leader to adopt the singular expedient of hiding Eveline in the tomb, while one of their own number, dressed in her clothes, might serve as a decoy to deceive their assailants, and lead them from the spot where she was really concealed, to which it was no doubt the purpose of the banditti to return, when they had eluded their pursuers.

Accordingly, the robbers had already drawn up before the tomb for the purpose of regularly retreating, until they should find some suitable place either for making a stand, or where, if overmatched, they might, by abandoning their horses and dispersing among the rocks, evade the attack of the Norman cavalry. Their plan had been defeated by the precipitation of Damian, who, beholding as he thought the plumes and mantle of the Lady Eveline in the rear of their party, charged them without considering either the odds of numbers or the lightness of his own armour, which, consisting only of a head-piece and a buff surcoat, offered but imperfect resistance to the Welsh knives and glaives. He was accordingly wounded severely at the onset, and would have been slain, but for the exertions of his few followers, and the fears of the Welsh that, while thus continuing the battle in front, they might be assaulted in the rear by the followers of Eveline, whom they must now suppose were all in arms and motion. They retreated, therefore, or rather fled, and the attendants of Damian were despatched after them by their fallen master, with directions to let no consideration induce them to leave off the chase until the captive Lady of the Garde Doloureuse was delivered from her ravishers.

The outlaws, secure in their knowledge of the paths and the activity of their small Welsh horses, made an orderly retreat, with the exception of two or three of their rearguard, cut down by Damian in his furious onset. They shot arrows, from time to time, at the men-at-arms, and laughed at the ineffectual efforts which these heavy-armed warriors, with their barbed horses, made to overtake them. But the scene was changed by the appearance of Wilkin Flammock, on his puissant war-horse, who was beginning to ascend the pass, leading a party consisting both of foot and horse. The fear of being intercepted caused the outlaws to have recourse to their last stratagem, and, abandoning their Welsh nags, they betook themselves to the cliffs, and, by superior activity and dexterity, baffled, generally speaking, the attempts of their pursuers on either hand. All of them, however, were not equally fortunate, for two or three fell into the hands of Flammock's party; amongst others, the person upon whom Eveline's clothes had been placed, and who now, to the great disappointment of those who had attached themselves to his pursuit, proved to be, not the lady whom they were emulous to deliver, but a fair-haired young Welshman, whose wild looks and incoherent speech seemed to

argue a disturbed imagination. This would not have saved him from immediate death, the usual doom of captives taken in such skirmishes, had not the faint blast of Damian's horn, sounding from above, recalled his own party, and summoned that of Wilkin Flammock to the spot; while, in the confusion and hurry of their obeying the signal, the pity or the contempt of his guards suffered the prisoner to escape. They had, indeed, little to learn from him, even had he been disposed to give intelligence, or capable of communicating it. All were well assured that their lady had fallen into an ambuscade, formed by Dawfyd the One-eyed, a redoubted freebooter of the period, who had ventured upon this hardy enterprise in the hope of obtaining a large ransom for the captive Eveline, and all, incensed at his extreme insolence and audacity, devoted his head and limbs to the eagles and the ravens.

These were the particulars which the followers of Flammock and of Damian learned by comparing notes with each other on the incidents of the day. As they returned by the Red Pool, they were joined by Dame Gillian, who, after many exclamations of joy at the unexpected liberation of her lady, and as many of sorrow at the unexpected disaster of Damian, proceeded to inform the men-at-arms that the merchant whose hawks had been the original cause of these adventures had been taken prisoner by two or three of the Welsh in their retreat, and that she herself and the wounded Raoul would have shared the same fate, but that they had no horse left to mount her upon, and did not consider old Raoul as worth either ransom or the trouble of killing. One had, indeed, flung a stone at him as he lay on the hillside, but happily, as his dame said, it fell something short of him. 'It was but a little fellow who threw it,' she said. 'There was a big man amongst them; if he had tried, it 's like, by Our Lady's grace, he had cast it a thought farther.' So saying, the dame gathered herself up, and adjusted her dress for again mounting on horseback.

The wounded Damian was placed on a litter, hastily constructed of boughs, and, with the females, was placed in the centre of the little troop, augmented by the rest of the young knight's followers, who began to rejoin his standard. The united body now marched with military order and precaution, and winded through the passes with the attention of men prepared to meet and to repel injury.

CHAPTER XXVI

What! fair, and young, and faithful too?
A miracle, if this be true.

WALLER.

ROSE, by nature one of the most disinterested and affectionate maidens that ever breathed, was the first who, hastily considering the peculiar condition in which her lady was placed, and the marked degree of restraint which had hitherto characterised her intercourse with her youthful guardian, became anxious to know how the wounded knight was to be disposed of; and when she came to Eveline's side for the purpose of asking this important question, her resolution wellnigh failed her.

The appearance of Eveline was indeed such as might have made it almost cruelty to intrude upon her any other subject of anxious consideration than those with which her mind had been so lately assailed, and was still occupied. Her countenance was as pale as death could have made it, unless where it was specked with drops of blood; her veil, torn and disordered, was soiled with dust and with gore; her hair, wildly dishevelled, fell in elf-locks on her brow and shoulders, and a single broken and ragged feather, which was all that remained of her head-gear, had been twisted among her tresses and still flowed there, as if in mockery, rather than ornament. Her eyes were fixed on the litter where Damian was deposited, and she rode close beside it, without apparently wasting a thought on anything, save the danger of him who was extended there.

Rose plainly saw that her lady was under feelings of excitation which might render it difficult for her to take a wise and prudent view of her own situation. She endeavoured gradually to awaken her to a sense of it. 'Dearest lady,' said Rose, 'will it please you to take my mantle?'

'Torment me not,' answered Eveline, with some sharpness in her accent.

'Indeed, my lady,' said Dame Gillian, bustling up as one who feared her functions as mistress of the robes might be interfered with — 'indeed, my lady, Rose Flammock speaks truth; and neither your kirtle nor your gown are sitting as they should do; and, to speak truth, they are but barely decent. And so, if Rose will turn herself, and put her horse out of my way,' continued the tire-woman, 'I will put your dress in better order in the sticking in of a bodkin than any Fleming of them all could do in twelve hours.'

'I care not for my dress,' replied Eveline, in the same manner as before.

'Care then for your honour — for your fame,' said Rose, riding close to her mistress and whispering in her ear; 'think, and that hastily, how you are to dispose of this wounded young man.'

'To the castle,' answered Eveline aloud, as if scorning the affectation of secrecy — 'lead to the castle, and that straight as you can.'

'Why not rather to his own camp, or to Malpas?' said Rose. 'Dearest lady, believe, it will be for the best.'

'Wherefore not — wherefore not? Wherefore not leave him on the wayside at once, to the knife of the Welshman and the teeth of the wolf? Once — twice — three times has he been my preserver. Where I go, he shall go; nor will I be in safety myself a moment sooner than I know that he is so.'

Rose saw that she could make no impression on her mistress, and her own reflection told her that the wounded man's life might be endangered by a longer transportation than was absolutely necessary. An expedient occurred to her, by which she imagined this objection might be obviated; but it was necessary she should consult her father. She struck her palfrey with her riding-rod, and in a moment her diminutive, though beautiful, figure and her spirited little jennet were by the side of the gigantic Fleming and his tall black horse, and riding, as it were, in their vast shadow. 'My dearest father,' said Rose, 'the lady intends that Sir Damian be transported to the castle, where it is like he may be a long sojourner — what think you, is that wholesome counsel?'

'Wholesome for the youth, surely, Roschen,' answered the Fleming, 'because he will better escape the risk of a fever.'

'True; but is it wise for my lady?' continued Rose.

'Wise enough, if she deal wisely. But wherefore shouldst thou doubt her, Roschen?'

'I know not,' said Rose, unwilling to breathe even to her father the fears and doubts which she herself entertained; 'but where there are evil tongues, there may be evil rehearsing. Sir Damian and my lady are both very young. Methinks it were better, dearest father, would you offer the shelter of your roof to the wounded knight, in the stead of his being carried to the castle.'

That I shall not, wench,' answered the Fleming, hastily — 'that I shall not, if I may help. Norman shall not cross my quiet threshold, nor Englishman neither, to mock my quiet thrift and consume my substance. Thou dost not know them, because thou art ever with thy lady, and hast her good favour; but I know them well, and the best I can get from them is "Lazy Flanderkin," and "Greedy Flanderkin," and "Flemish sot" — I thank the saints they cannot say "Coward Flanderkin," since Gwenwyn's Welsh uproar.'

'I had ever thought, my father,' answered Rose, 'that your spirit was too calm to regard these base calumnies. Bethink you we are under this lady's banner, and that she has been my loving mistress, and her father was your good lord; to the Constable, too, are you beholden for enlarged privileges. Money may pay debt, but kindness only can requite kindness; and I forebode that you will never have such an opportunity to do kindness to the houses of Berenger and De Lacy as by opening the doors of your house to this wounded knight.'

'The doors of my house!' answered the Fleming — 'do I know how long I may call that, or any house upon earth, my own? Alas, my daughter, we came hither to fly from the rage of the elements, but who knows how soon we may perish by the wrath of men!'

'You speak strangely, my father,' said Rose. 'It holds not with your solid wisdom to augur such general evil from the rash enterprise of a Welsh outlaw.'

'I think not of the one-eyed robber,' said Wilkin, 'although the increase and audacity of such robbers as Dawfyd is no good sign of a quiet country. But thou, who livest within yonder walls, hearest but little of what passes without, and your estate is less anxious; you had known nothing of the news from me, unless in case I had found it necessary to remove to another country.'

'To remove, my dearest father, from the land where your thrift and industry have gained you an honourable competency?'

'Ay, and where the hunger of wicked men, who envy me the produce of my thrift, may likely bring me to a dishonourable death. There have been tumults among the English rabble in more than one county, and their wrath is directed against those of our nation, as if we were Jews or heathens, and not better Christians and better men than themselves. They have, at York, Bristol, and elsewhere, sacked the houses of the Flemings, spoiled their goods, misused their families, and murdered themselves. And why, except that we have brought among them the skill and the industry which they possessed not; and because wealth, which they would never else have seen in Britain, was the reward of our art and our toil? Roschen, this evil spirit is spreading wider daily. Here we are more safe than elsewhere, because we form a colony of some numbers and strength. But I confide not in our neighbours; and hadst not thou, Rose, been in security, I would long ere this have given up all and left Britain.'

'Given up all and left Britain!' The words sounded prodigious in the ears of his daughter, who knew better than any one how successful her father had been in his industry, and how unlikely one of his firm and sedate temper was to abandon known and present advantages for the dread of distant or contingent peril. At length she replied, 'If such be your peril, my father, methinks your house and goods cannot have a better protection than the presence of this noble knight. Where lives the man who dare aught of violence against the house which harbours Damian de Lacy?'

'I know not that,' said the Fleming, in the same composed and steady, but ominous, tone. 'May Heaven forgive it me if it be sin! but I see little save folly in these Crusades, which the priesthood have preached up so successfully. Here has the Constable been absent for nearly three years, and no certain tidings of his life or death, victory or defeat. He marched from hence, as if he meant not to draw bridle or sheathe sword until the Holy Sepulchre was won from the Saracens, yet we can hear with no certainty whether even a hamlet has been taken from the Saracens. In the meanwhile, the people that are at home grow discontented; their lords, with the better part of their followers, are in Palestine — dead or alive we scarcely know; the people themselves are oppressed and flayed by stewards and deputies, whose yoke is neither so light nor so lightly endured as that of the actual lord. The commons, who naturally hate the knights and gentry, think it no bad time

to make some head against them; ay, and there be some of noble blood who would not care to be their leaders, that they may have their share in the spoil; for foreign expeditions and profligate habits have made many poor, and he that is poor will murder his father for money. I hate poor people, and I would the devil had every man who cannot keep himself by the work of his own hand!'

The Fleming concluded, with this characteristic imprecation, a speech which gave Rose a more frightful view of the state of England than, shut up as she was within the Garde Doloureuse, she had before had an opportunity of learning. 'Surely,' she said — 'surely these violences of which you speak are not to be dreaded by those who live under the banner of De Lacy and of Berenger?'

'Berenger subsists but in name,' answered Wilkin Flammock, 'and Damian, though a brave youth, hath not his uncle's ascendency of character and authority. His men also complain that they are harassed with the duty of watching for protection of a castle in itself impregnable and sufficiently garrisoned, and that they lose all opportunity of honourable enterprise, as they call it — that is, of fight and spoil — in this inactive and inglorious manner of life. They say that Damian the beardless was a man, but that Damian with the mustachio is no better than a woman; and that age, which has darkened his upper lip, hath at the same time blenched his courage. And they say more, which were but wearisome to tell.'

'Nay, but, let me know what they say - let me know it, for Heaven's sake!' answered Rose, 'if it concern, as it must concern, my dear lady.'

'Even so, Roschen,' answered Wilkin. 'There are many among the Norman men-at-arms who talk, over their wine-cups, how that Damian de Lacy is in love with his uncle's betrothed bride; ay, and that they correspond together by art magic.'

'By art magic, indeed, it must be,' said Rose, smiling scornfully, 'for by no earthly means do they correspond, as I, for one, can bear witness.'

'To art magic, accordingly, they impute it,' quoth Wilkin Flammock, 'that, so soon as ever my lady stirs beyond the portal of her castle, De Lacy is in the saddle with a party of his cavalry, though they are positively certain that he has received no messenger, letter, or other ordinary notice of her purpose; nor have they ever, on such occasions, scoured the

passes long ere they have seen or heard of my Lady Eveline's being abroad.'

'This has not escaped me,' said Rose; 'and my lady has expressed herself even displeased at the accuracy which Damian displayed in procuring a knowledge of her motions, as well as at the officious punctuality with which he has attended and guarded them. To-day has, however, shown,' she continued, 'that his vigilance may serve a good purpose; and as they never met upon these occasions, but continued at such distance as excluded even the possibility of intercourse, methinks they might have escaped the censure of the most suspicious.'

'Ay, my daughter Roschen,' replied Wilkin, 'but it is possible even to drive caution so far as to excite suspicion. Why, say the men-at-arms, should these two observe such constant, yet such guarded, intelligence with one another? Why should their approach be so near, and why, yet, should they never meet? If they had been merely the nephew and the uncle's bride, they must have had interviews avowedly and frankly; and, on the other hand, if they be two secret lovers, there is reason to believe that they do find their own private places of meeting, though they have art sufficient to conceal them.'

'Every word that you speak, my father,' replied the generous Rose, 'increases the absolute necessity that you receive this wounded youth into your house. Be the evils you dread ever so great, yet may you rely upon it that they cannot be augmented by admitting him, with a few of his faithful followers.'

'Not one follower,' said the Fleming, hastily — 'not one beef-fed knave of them, save the page that is to tend him and the doctor that is to attempt his cure.'

'But I may offer the [illegible] your roof to these three, at least?' answered R[illegible]

'Do as thou wilt — [illegible],' said the doating father. 'By my faith, Roschen, it [illegible] well for thee thou hast sense and moderation in asking, since I am so foolishly prompt in granting. This is one of your freaks, now, of honour or generosity; but commend me to prudence and honesty. Ah! Rose — Rose, those who would do what is better than good sometimes bring about what is worse than bad! But I think I shall be quit of the trouble for the fear; and that thy mistress, who is, with reverence, something of a damsel-errant, will stand stoutly for the chivalrous privilege of lodging her knight in her own bower, and tending him in person.'

The Fleming prophesied true. Rose had no sooner made the

proposal to Eveline that the wounded Damian should be left at her father's house for his recovery than her mistress briefly and positively rejected the proposal. 'He has been my preserver,' she said, 'and if there be one being left for whom the gates of the Garde Doloureuse should of themselves fly open, it is to Damian de Lacy. Nay, damsel, look not upon me with that suspicious and yet sorrowful countenance; they that are beyond disguise, my girl, contemn suspicion. It is to God and Our Lady that I must answer, and to them my bosom lies open!'

They proceeded in silence to the castle gate, when the Lady Eveline issued her orders that her guardian, as she emphatically termed Damian, should be lodged in her father's apartment; and, with the prudence of more advanced age, she gave the necessary directions for the reception and accommodation of his followers, and the arrangements which such an accession of guests required in the fortress. All this she did with the utmost composure and presence of mind, even before she altered or arranged her own disordered dress.

Another step still remained to be taken. She hastened to the chapel of the Virgin, and prostrating herself before her divine protectress, returned thanks for her second deliverance, and implored her guidance and direction, and, through her intercession, that of Almighty God, for the disposal and regulation of her conduct. 'Thou knowest,' she said, 'that from no confidence in my own strength have I thrust myself into danger. O make me strong where I am most weak. Let not my gratitude and my compassion be a snare to me; and while I strive to discharge the duties which thankfulness imposes on me, save me from the evil tongues of men, and save — O save me from the insidious devices of my own heart!'

She then told her rosary with devout fervour, and, retiring from the chapel to her own apartment, summoned her women to adjust her dress, and remove the external appearance of the violence to which she had been so lately subjected.

CHAPTER XXVII

Julia. Gentle sir,
You are our captive; but we 'll use you so,
That you shall think your prison-joys may match
Whate'er your liberty hath known of pleasure.
Roderick. No, fairest, we have trifled here too long;
And, lingering to see your roses blossom,
I 've let my laurels wither.

Old Play.

ARRAYED in garments of a mourning colour, and of a fashion more matronly than perhaps altogether befitted her youth — plain to an extremity, and devoid of all ornament save her rosary — Eveline now performed the duty of waiting upon her wounded deliverer — a duty which the etiquette of the time not only permitted, but peremptorily enjoined. She was attended by Rose and Dame Gillian. Margery, whose element was a sick-chamber, had been already despatched to that of the young knight, to attend to whatever his condition might require.

Eveline entered the room with a light step, as if unwilling to disturb the patient. She paused at the door, and cast her eyes around her. It had been her father's chamber, nor had she entered it since his violent death. Around the walls hung a part of his armour and weapons, with hawking-gloves, hunting-poles, and other instruments of silvan sport. These relics brought, as it were, in living form before her the stately presence of old Sir Raymond. 'Frown not, my father' — her lips formed the words, though her voice did not utter them — 'frown not: Eveline will never be unworthy of thee.'

Father Aldrovand and Amelot, the page of Damian, were seated by the bedside. They rose as Lady Eveline entered; and the first, who meddled a little with the healing art, said to Eveline, that 'The knight had slumbered for some time, and was now about to awake.'

Amelot at the same time came forward, and in a hasty and low voice begged that the chamber might be kept quiet and the spectators requested to retire. 'My lord,' he said, 'ever since his illness at Gloucester, is apt to speak something wildly as he awakes from sleep, and will be displeased with me should I permit any one to be near him.'

Eveline accordingly caused her women and the monk to retire into the ante-room, while she herself remained standing by the door-communication which connected the apartments, and heard Damian mention her name as he turned himself painfully on his couch. 'Is she safe and unharmed?' was his first question, and it was asked with an eagerness which intimated how far it preceded all other considerations. When Amelot replied in the affirmative, he sighed, as one whose bosom is relieved from some weighty load, and, in a less animated voice, asked of the page where they were. 'This apartment,' he said, 'with its furniture, are all strange to me.'

'My dear master,' said Amelot, 'you are at present too weak to ask questions and receive explanations.'

'Be I where I will,' said Damian, as if recovering his recollection, 'I am not in the place where my duty calls me. Tell my trumpets to sound to horse — to horse, and let Ralph Genvil carry my banner. To horse — to horse! we have not a moment to lose.'

The wounded knight made some effort to rise, which, in his state of weakness, Amelot was easily able to frustrate. 'Thou art right,' he said, as he sunk back into his reclining posture — 'thou art right, I am weak; but why should strength remain when honour is lost?'

The unhappy young man covered his face with his hands, and groaned in agony, which seemed more that of the mind than of the body. Lady Eveline approached his bedside with unassured steps, fearing she knew not what, yet earnest to testify the interest which she felt in the distresses of the sufferer. Damian looked up and beheld her, and again hid his face with his hands.

'What means this strange passion, sir knight?' said Eveline, with a voice which, at first weak and trembling, gradually obtained steadiness and composure. 'Ought it to grieve you so much, sworn as you are to the duties of chivalry, that Heaven hath twice made you its instrument to save the unfortunate Eveline Berenger?'

'O no — no!' he exclaimed with rapidity; 'since you are saved, all is well; but time presses — it is necessary I should

presently depart — nowhere ought I now to tarry — least of all within this castle. Once more, Amelot, let them get to horse!'

'Nay, my good lord,' said the damsel, 'this must not be. As your ward, I cannot let my guardian part thus suddenly; as a physician, I cannot allow my patient to destroy himself. It is impossible that you can brook the saddle.'

'A litter — a bier — a cart, to drag forth the dishonoured knight and traitor — all were too good for me — a coffin were best of all! But see, Amelot, that it be framed like that of the meanest churl: no spurs displayed on the pall, no shield with the ancient coat of the De Lacys, no helmet with their knightly crest must deck the hearse of him whose name is dishonoured!'

'Is his brain unsettled,' said Eveline, looking with terror from the wounded man to his attendant; 'or is there some dreadful mystery in these broken words? If so, speak it forth; and if it may be amended by life or goods, my deliverer will sustain no wrong.'

Amelot regarded her with a dejected and melancholy air, shook his head, and looked down on his master with a countenance which seemed to express that the questions which she asked could not be prudently answered in Sir Damian's presence. The Lady Eveline, observing this gesture, stepped back into the outer apartment, and made Amelot a sign to follow her. He obeyed, after a glance at his master, who remained in the same disconsolate posture as formerly, with his hands crossed over his eyes, like one who wished to exclude the light and all which the light made visible.

When Amelot was in the wardrobe, Eveline, making signs to her attendants to keep at such distance as the room permitted, questioned him closely on the cause of his master's desperate expression of sorrow and remorse. 'Thou knowest,' she said, 'that I am bound to succour thy lord, if I may, both from gratitude, as one whom he hath served to the peril of his life, and also from kinsmanship. Tell me, therefore, in what case he stands, that I may help him if I can; that is,' she added, her pale cheeks deeply colouring, 'if the cause of his distress be fitting for me to hear.'

The page bowed low, yet showed such embarrassment when he began to speak as produced a corresponding degree of confusion in the Lady Eveline, who, nevertheless, urged him as before 'to speak without scruple or delay — so that the tenor of his discourse was fitting for her ears.'

'Believe me, noble lady,' said Amelot, 'your commands had been instantly obeyed, but that I fear my master's displeasure if I talk of his affairs without his warrant; nevertheless, on your command, whom I know he honours above all earthly beings, I will speak thus far, that, if his life be safe from the wounds he has received, his honour and worship may be in great danger, if it please not Heaven to send a remedy.'

'Speak on,' said Eveline; 'and be assured you will do Sir Damian de Lacy no prejudice by the confidence you may rest in me.'

'I well believe it, lady,' said the page. 'Know, then, if it be not already known to you, that the clowns and rabble who have taken arms against the nobles in the west pretend to be favoured in their insurrection not only by Randal Lacy, but by my master, Sir Damian.'

'They lie that dare charge him with such foul treason to his own blood, as well as to his sovereign,' replied Eveline.

'Well do I believe they lie,' said Amelot; 'but this hinders not their falsehoods from being believed by those who know him less inwardly. More than one runaway from our troop have joined this rabblement, and that gives some credit to the scandal. And then they say - - they say — that — in short, that my master longs to possess the lands in his proper right which he occupies as his uncle's administrator; and that if the old Constable — I crave your pardon, madam — should return from Palestine, he should find it difficult to obtain possession of his own again.'

'The sordid wretches judge of others by their own base minds, and conceive those temptations too powerful for men of worth which they are themselves conscious they would be unable to resist. But are the insurgents then so insolent and so powerful? We have heard of their violences, but only as if it had been some popular tumult.'

'We had notice last night that they have drawn together in great force, and besieged or blockaded Wild Wenlock, with his men-at-arms, in a village about ten miles hence. He hath sent to my master, as his kinsman and companion-at-arms, to come to his assistance. We were on horseback this morning to march to the rescue, when ——'

He paused, and seemed unwilling to proceed. Eveline caught at the word. 'When ye heard of my danger?' she said. 'I would ye had rather heard of my death!'

'Surely, noble lady,' said the page, with his eyes fixed on the

ground, 'nothing but so strong a cause could have made my master halt his troop and carry the better part of them to the Welsh mountains, when his countryman's distress, and the commands of the king's lieutenant, so peremptorily demanded his presence elsewhere.'

'I knew it,' she said — 'I knew I was born to be his destruction; yet methinks this is worse than I dreamed of, when the worst was in my thoughts. I feared to occasion his death, not his loss of fame. For God's sake, young Amelot, do what thou canst, and that without loss of time! Get thee straightway to horse, and join to thy own men as many as thou canst gather of mine. Go — ride, my brave youth — show thy master's banner, and let them see that his forces and his heart are with them, though his person be absent. Haste — haste, for the time is precious!'

'But the safety of this castle — but your own safety?' said the page. 'God knows how willingly I would do aught to save his fame! But I know my master's mood; and were you to suffer by my leaving the Garde Doloureuse, even although I were to save him lands, life, and honour by my doing so, I should be more like to taste of his dagger than of his thanks or bounty.'

'Go, nevertheless, dear Amelot,' said she: 'gather what force thou canst make, and begone.'

'You spur a willing horse, madam,' said the page, springing to his feet; 'and, in the condition of my master, I see nothing better than that his banner should be displayed against these churls.'

'To arms, then,' said Eveline, hastily — 'to arms, and win thy spurs. Bring me assurance that thy master's honour is safe, and I will myself buckle them on thy heels. Here — take this blessed rosary, bind it on thy crest, and be the thought of the Virgin of the Garde Doloureuse, that never failed a votary, strong with thee in the hour of conflict.'

She had scarcely ended, ere Amelot flew from her presence, and summoning together such horse as he could assemble, both of his master's and of those belonging to the castle, there were soon forty cavaliers mounted in the courtyard.

But although the page was thus far readily obeyed, yet when the soldiers heard they were to go forth on a dangerous expedition, with no more experienced general than a youth of fifteen, they showed a decided reluctance to move from the castle. The old soldiers of De Lacy said, 'Damian himself was almost too

youthful to command them, and had no right to delegate his authority to a mere boy'; while the followers of Berenger said, 'Their mistress might be satisfied with her deliverance of the morning, without trying farther dangerous conclusions by diminishing the garrison of her castle. The times,' they said, 'were stormy, and it was wisest to keep a stone roof over their heads.'

The more the soldiers communicated their ideas and apprehensions to each other, the stronger their disinclination to the undertaking became; and when Amelot, who, page-like, had gone to see that his own horse was accoutred and brought forth, returned to the castle-yard, he found them standing confusedly together, some mounted, some on foot, all men speaking loud, and all in a state of disorder. Ralph Genvil, a veteran whose face was seamed with many a scar, and who had long followed the trade of a soldier of fortune, stood apart from the rest, holding his horse's bridle in one hand, and in the other the banner-spear, around which the banner of De Lacy was still folded.

'What means this, Genvil?' said the page, angrily. 'Why do you not mount your horse and display the banner? and what occasions all this confusion?'

'Truly, sir page,' said Genvil, composedly, 'I am not in my saddle, because I have some regard for this old silken rag, which I have borne to honour in my time, and I will not willingly carry it where men are unwilling to follow and defend it.'

'No march — no sally — no lifting of banner to-day!' cried the soldiers, by way of burden to the bannerman's discourse.

'How now, cowards, do you mutiny?' said Amelot, laying his hand on his sword.

'Menace not me, sir boy,' said Genvil, 'nor shake your sword my way. I tell thee, Amelot, were my weapon to cross with yours, never flail sent abroad more chaff than I would make splinters of your hatched and gilded toasting-iron. Look you, there are grey-bearded men here that care not to be led about on any boy's humour. For me, I stand little upon that, and I care not whether one boy or another commands me. But I am the Lacy's man for the time; and I am not sure that, in marching to the aid of this Wild Wenlock, we shall do an errand the Lacy will thank us for. Why led he us not thither in the morning, when we were commanded off into the mountains?'

'You well know the cause,' said the page.

'Yes, we do know the cause; or, if we do not, we can guess

it,' answered the bannerman, with a horse-laugh, which was echoed by several of his companions.

'I will cram the calumny down thy false throat, Genvil!' said the page; and, drawing his sword, threw himself headlong on the bannerman, without considering their great difference of strength.

Genvil was contented to foil his attack by one, and, as it seemed, a slight, movement of his gigantic arm, with which he forced the page aside, parrying, at the same time, his blow with the standard spear.

There was another loud laugh, and Amelot, feeling all his efforts baffled, threw his sword from him, and, weeping in pride and indignation, hastened back to tell the Lady Eveline of his bad success. 'All,' he said, 'is lost: the cowardly villains have mutinied, and will not move; and the blame of their sloth and faintheartedness will be laid on my dear master!'

'That shall never be,' said Eveline, 'should I die to prevent it. Follow me, Amelot.'

She hastily threw a scarlet scarf over her dark garments, and hastened down to the courtyard, followed by Gillian, assuming, as she went, various attitudes and actions, expressing astonishment and pity, and by Rose, carefully suppressing all appearance of the feelings which she really entertained.

Eveline entered the castle-court, with the kindling eye and glowing brow which her ancestors were wont to bear in danger and extremity, when their soul was arming to meet the storm, and displayed in their mien and looks high command and contempt of danger. She seemed at the moment taller than her usual size; and it was with a voice distinct and clearly heard, though not exceeding the delicacy of feminine tone, that the mutineers heard her address them. 'How is this, my masters?' she said; and as she spoke, the bulky forms of the armed soldiers seemed to draw closer together, as if to escape her individual censure. It was like a group of heavy water-fowl, when they close to avoid the stoop of the slight and beautiful merlin, dreading the superiority of its nature and breeding over their own inert physical strength. 'How now?' again she demanded of them; 'is it a time, think ye, to mutiny, when your lord is absent, and his nephew and lieutenant lies stretched on a bed of sickness? Is it thus you keep your oaths? Thus ye merit your leader's bounty? Shame on ye, craven hounds, that quail and give back the instant you lose sight of the huntsman!'

There was a pause; the soldiers looked on each other, and

then again on Eveline, as if ashamed alike to hold out in their mutiny or to return to their usual discipline.

'I see how it is, my brave friends — ye lack a leader here; but stay not for that — I will guide you myself, and, woman as I am, there need not a man of you fear disgrace where a Berenger commands. Trap my palfrey with a steel saddle,' she said, 'and that instantly.' She snatched from the ground the page's light head-piece, and threw it over her hair, caught up his drawn sword, and went on. 'Here I promise you my countenance and guidance; this gentleman,' she pointed to Genvil, 'shall supply my lack of military skill. He looks like a man that hath seen many a day of battle, and can well teach a young leader her devoir.'

'Certes,' said the old soldier, smiling in spite of himself, and shaking his head at the same time, 'many a battle have I seen, but never under such a commander.'

'Nevertheless,' said Eveline, seeing how the eyes of the rest turned on Genvil, 'you do not — cannot — will not — refuse to follow me? You do not as a soldier, for my weak voice supplies your captain's orders; you cannot as a gentleman, for a lady, a forlorn and distressed female, asks you a boon; you will not as an Englishman, for your country requires your sword, and your comrades are in danger. Unfurl your banner, then, and march.'

'I would do so, upon my soul, fair lady,' answered Genvil, as if preparing to unfold the banner, 'and Amelot might lead us well enough, with advantage of some lessons from me, but I wot not whether you are sending us on the right road.'

'Surely — surely,' said Eveline, earnestly, 'it must be the right road which conducts you to the relief of Wenlock and his followers, besieged by the insurgent boors.'

'I know not,' said Genvil, still hesitating. 'Our leader here, Sir Damian de Lacy, protects the commons — men say he befriends them; and I know he quarrelled with Wild Wenlock once for some petty wrong he did to the miller's wife [daughter] at Twyford. We should be finely off, when our fiery young leader is on foot again, if he should find we had been fighting against the side he favoured.'

'Assure yourself,' said the maiden, anxiously, 'the more he would protect the commons against oppression, the more he would put them down when oppressing others. Mount and ride, save Wenlock and his men; there is life and death in every moment. I will warrant, with my life and lands, that

whatsoever you do will be held good service to De Lacy. Come, then, follow me.'

'None surely can know Sir Damian's purpose better than you, fair damsel,' answered Genvil; 'nay, for that matter, you can make him change as ye list. And so I will march with the men, and we will aid Wenlock, if it is yet time, as I trust it may; for he is a rugged wolf, and when he turns to bay will cost the boors blood enough ere they sound a mort. But do you remain within the castle, fair lady, and trust to Amelot and me. Come, sir page, assume the command, since so it must be; though, by my faith, it is pity to take the head-piece from that pretty head and the sword from that pretty hand. By St. George! to see them there is a credit to the soldier's profession.'

The lady accordingly surrendered the weapons to Amelot, exhorting him in few words to forget the offence he had received, and do his devoir manfully. Meanwhile, Genvil slowly unrolled the pennon, then shook it abroad, and, without putting his foot in the stirrup, aided himself a little with resting on the spear, and threw himself into the saddle, heavily armed as he was. 'We are ready now, an it like your juvenility,' said he to Amelot; and then, while the page was putting the band into order, he whispered to his nearest comrade, 'Methinks, instead of this old swallow's tail,[1] we should muster rarely under a broidered petticoat: a furbelowed petticoat has no fellow in my mind. Look you, Stephen Pontoys, I can forgive Damian now for forgetting his uncle and his own credit about this wench; for, by my faith, she is one I could have doated to death upon *par amours*. Ah! evil luck be the women's portion! they govern us at every turn, Stephen, and at every age. When they are young, they bribe us with fair looks and sugared words, sweet kisses and love tokens; and when they are of middle age, they work us to their will by presents and courtesies, red wine and red gold; and when they are old, we are fain to run their errands to get out of sight of their old leathern visages. Well, old De Lacy should have staid at home and watched his falcon. But it is all one to us, Stephen, and we may make some vantage to-day, for these boors have plundered more than one castle.'

'Ay — ay,' answered Pontoys, 'the boor to the booty, and the bannerman to the boor, a right pithy proverb. But, prithee, canst thou say why his pageship leads us not forward yet?'

[1] See Knight's Pennon. Note 11.

'Pshaw!' answered Genvil, 'the shake I gave him has addled his brains; or perchance he has not swallowed all his tears yet; sloth it is not, for 't is a forward cockeril for his years, wherever honour is to be won. See, they now begin to move. Well, it is a singular thing this gentle blood, Stephen; for here is a child whom I but now baffled like a schoolboy must lead us greybeards where we may get our heads broken, and that at the command of a light lady.'

'I warrant Sir Damian is secretary to my pretty lady,' answered Stephen Pontoys, 'as this springald Amelot is to Sir Damian; and so we poor men must obey and keep our mouths shut.'

'But our eyes open, Stephen Pontoys; forget not that.'

They were by this time out of the gates of the castle, and upon the road leading to the village, in which, as they understood by the intelligence of the morning, Wenlock was besieged or blockaded by a greatly superior number of the insurgent commons. Amelot rode at the head of the troop, still embarrassed by the affront which he had received in presence of the soldiers, and lost in meditating how he was to eke out that deficiency of experience which on former occasions had been supplied by the counsels of the bannerman, with whom he was ashamed to seek a reconciliation. But Genvil was not of a nature absolutely sullen, though an habitual grumbler. He rode up to the page, and having made his obeisance, respectfully asked him whether it were not well that some one or two of their number pricked forward upon good horses to learn how it stood with Wenlock, and whether they should be able to come up in time to his assistance.

'Methinks, bannerman,' answered Amelot, 'you should take the ruling of the troop, since you know so fittingly what should be done. You may be the fitter to command, because —— But I will not upbraid you.'

'Because I know so ill how to obey,' replied Genvil — 'that is what you would say; and, by my faith, I cannot deny but there may be some truth in it. But is it not peevish in thee to let a fair expedition be unwisely conducted, because of a foolish word or a sudden action? Come, let it be peace with us.'

'With all my heart,' answered Amelot; 'and I will send out an advanced party upon the adventure, as thou hast advised me.'

'Let it be old Stephen Pontoys and two of the Chester

spears: he is as wily as an old fox, and neither hope nor fear will draw him a hairbreadth farther than judgment warrants.'

Amelot eagerly embraced the hint, and, at his command, Pontoys and two lances darted forward to reconnoitre the road before them, and inquire into the condition of those whom they were advancing to succour. 'And now that we are on the old terms, sir page,' said the bannerman, 'tell me, if thou canst, doth not yonder fair lady love our handsome knight *par amours?*'

'It is a false calumny,' said Amelot, indignantly; 'betrothed as she is to his uncle, I am convinced she would rather die than have such a thought, and so would our master. I have noted this heretical belief in thee before now, Genvil, and I have prayed thee to check it. You know the thing cannot be, for you know they have scarce ever met.'

'How should I know that,' said Genvil, 'or thou either? Watch them ever so close — much water slides past the mill that Hob Miller never wots of. They do correspond; that, at least, thou canst not deny?'

'I do deny it,' said Amelot, 'as I deny all that can touch their honour.'

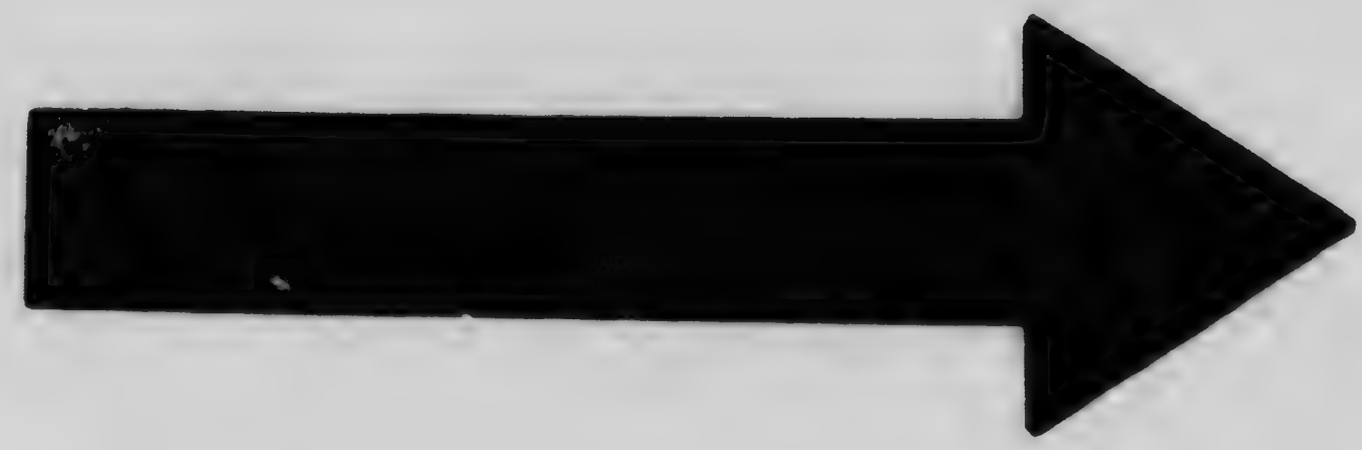
'Then how, in Heaven's name, comes he by such perfect knowledge of her motions as he has displayed no longer since than the morning?'

'How should I tell?' answered the page. 'There be such things, surely, as saints and good angels, and if there be one on earth deserves their protection, it is Dame Eveline Berenger.'

'Well said, master counsel-keeper,' replied Genvil, laughing; 'but that will hardly pass on an old trooper. Saints and angels, quotha! most saintlike doings, I warrant you.'

The page was about to continue his angry vindication, when Stephen Pontoys and his followers returned upon the spur. 'Wenlock holds out bravely,' he exclaimed, 'though he is fellly girded in with these boors. The large cross-bows are doing good service; and I little doubt his making his place good till we come up, if it please you to ride something sharply. They have assailed the barriers, and were close up to them even now, but were driven back with small success.'

The party were now put in as rapid motion as might consist with order, and soon reached the top of a small eminence, beneath which lay the village where Wenlock was making his defence. The air rung with the cries and shouts of the in-



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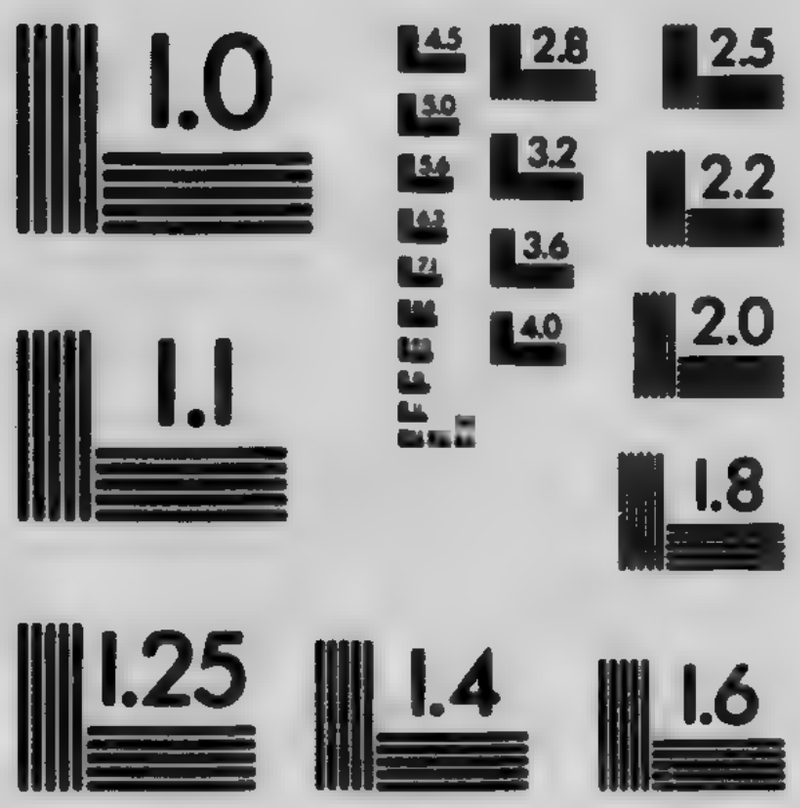

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surgents, who, numerous as bees, and possessed of that dogged spirit of courage so peculiar to the English, thronged like ants to the barriers, and endeavoured to break down the palisades, or to climb over them, in despite of the showers of stones and arrows from within, by which they suffered great loss, as well as by the swords and battle-axes of the men-at-arms, whenever they came to hand-blows.

'We are in time — we are in time,' said Amelot, dropping the reins of his bridle and joyfully clapping his hands; 'shake thy banner abroad, Genvil — give Wenlock and his fellows a fair view of it. Comrades, halt — breathe your horses for a moment. Hark hither, Genvil. If we descend by yonder broad pathway into the meadow where the cattle are ——'

'Bravo, my young falcon!' replied Genvil, whose love of battle, like that of the war-horse of Job, kindled at the sight of the spears and at the sound of the trumpet; 'we shall have then an easy field for a charge on yonder knaves.'

'What a thick black cloud the villains make!' said Amelot; 'but we will let daylight through it with our lances. See, Genvil, the defenders hoist a signal to show they have seen us.'

'A signal to us!' exclaimed Genvil. 'By Heaven, it is a white flag — a signal of surrender!'

'Surrender! they cannot dream of it, when we are advancing to their succour,' replied Amelot; when two or three melancholy notes from the trumpets of the besieged, with a thundering and tumultuous acclamation from the besiegers, rendered the fact indisputable.

'Down goes Wenlock's pennon,' said Genvil, 'and the churls enter the barricades on all points. Here has been cowardice or treachery. What is to be done?'

'Advance on them,' said Amelot, 'retake the place, and deliver the prisoners.'

'Advance, indeed!' answered the bannerman — 'not a horse's length by my counsel; we should have every nail in our corslets counted with arrow-shot before we got down the hill in the face of such a multitude; and the place to storm afterwards — it were mere insanity.'

'Yet come a little forward along with me,' said the page; 'perhaps we may find some path by which we could descend unperceived.'

Accordingly they rode forward a little way to reconnoitre the face of the hill, the page still urging the possibility of descending it unperceived amid the confusion, when Genvil

answered impatiently, 'Unperceived! you are already perceived: here comes a fellow, pricking towards us as fast as his beast may trot.'

As he spoke, the rider came up to them. He was a short, thick-set peasant, in an ordinary frieze jacket and hose, with a blue cap on his head, which he had been scarcely able to pull over a shock head of red hair, that seemed in arms to repel the covering. The man's hands were bloody, and he carried at his saddlebow a linen bag, which was also stained with blood. 'Ye be of Damian de Lacy's company, be ye not?' said this rude messenger; and, when they answered in the affirmative, he proceeded with the same blunt courtesy, 'Hob Miller of Twyford commends him to Damian de Lacy, and, knowing his purpose to amend disorders in the commonwealth, Hob Miller sends him toll of the grist which he hath grinded'; and with that he took from the bag a human head and tendered it to Amelot.

'It is Wenlock's head,' said Genvil; 'how his eyes stare!'

'They will stare after no more wenches now,' said the boor; 'I have cured him of caterwauling.'

'Thou!' said Amelot, stepping back in disgust and indignation.

'Yes, I myself,' replied the peasant; 'I am Grand Justiciary of the Commons, for lack of a better.'

'Grand hangman, thou wouldst say,' replied Genvil.

'Call it what thou list,' replied the peasant. 'Truly, it behoves men in state to give good example. I'll bid no man do that I am not ready to do myself. It is as easy to hang a man as to say "hang him"; we will have no splitting of offices in this new world which is happily set up in Old England.'

'Wretch!' said Amelot, 'take back thy bloody token to them that sent thee. Hadst thou not come upon assurance, I had pinned thee to the earth with my lance. But, be assured, your cruelty shall be fearfully avenged. Come, Genvil, let us to our men; there is no farther use in abiding here.'

The fellow, who had expected a very different reception, stood staring after them for a few moments, then replaced his bloody trophy in the wallet, and rode back to them who sent him.

'This comes of meddling with men's *amourettes*,' said Genvil: 'Sir Damian would needs brawl with Wenlock about his dealings with this miller's daughter [wife], and you see they account him a favourer of their enterprise; it will be well if others do not take up the same opinion. I wish we were rid of the trouble

which such suspicions may bring upon us — ay, were it at the price of my best horse. I am like to lose him at any rate with the day's hard service, and I would it were the worst it is to cost us.'

The party returned, wearied and discomforted, to the castle of the Garde Doloureuse, and not without losing several of their number by the way — some straggling owing to the weariness of their horses, and others taking the opportunity of desertion, in order to join with the bands of insurgents and plunderers, who had now gathered together in different quarters, and were augmented by recruits from the dissolute soldiery.

Amelot, on his return to the castle, found that the state of his master was still very precarious, and that the Lady Eveline, though much exhausted, had not yet retired to rest, but was awaiting his return with impatience. He was introduced to her accordingly, and, with a heavy heart, mentioned the ineffectual event of his expedition.

'Now the saints have pity upon us!' said the Lady Eveline; 'for it seems as if a plague or pest attached to me, and extended itself to all who interest themselves in my welfare. From the moment they do so, their very virtues become snares to them; and what would, in every other case, recommend them to honour is turned to destruction to the friends of Eveline Berenger.'

'Fear not, fair lady,' said Amelot; 'here are still men enough in my master's camp to put down these disturbers of the public peace. I will but abide to receive his instructions, and will hence to-morrow, and draw out a force to restore quiet in this part of the country.'

'Alas! you know not yet the worst of it,' replied Eveline. 'Since you went hence, we have received certain notice that, when the soldiers at Sir Damian's camp heard of the accident which he this morning met with, already discontented with the inactive life which they had of late led, and dispirited by the hurts and reported death of their leader, they have altogether broken up and dispersed their forces. Yet be of good courage, Amelot,' she said; 'this house is strong enough to bear out a worse tempest than any that is likely to be poured on it; and if all men desert your master in wounds and affliction, it becomes yet more the part of Eveline Berenger to shelter and protect her deliverer.'

CHAPTER XXVIII

Let our proud trumpet shake their castle wall,
Menacing death and ruin.

OTWAY.

THE evil news with which the last chapter concluded were necessarily told to Damian de Lacy, as the person whom they chiefly concerned; and Lady Eveline herself undertook the task of communicating them, mingling what she said with tears, and again interrupting those tears to suggest topics of hope and comfort, which carried no consolation to her own bosom.

The wounded knight continued with his face turned towards her, listening to the disastrous tidings, as one who was no otherwise affected by them than as they regarded her who told the story. When she had done speaking, he continued as in a reverie with his eyes so intently fixed upon her that she rose up with the purpose of withdrawing from looks by which she felt herself embarrassed. He hastened to speak, that he might prevent her departure. 'All that you have said, fair lady,' he replied, 'had been enough, if told by another, to have broken my heart; for it tells me that the power and honour of my house, so solemnly committed to m harge, have been blasted in my misfortunes. But when I look upon you, and hear your voice, I forget everything, saving that you have been rescued and are here in honour and safety. Let me therefore pray of your goodness that I may be removed from the castle which holds you, and sent elsewhere. I am in no shape worthy of your farther care, since I have no longer the swords of others at my disposal, and am totally unable for the present to draw my own.'

'And if you are generous enough to think of me in your own rtunes, noble knight,' answered Eveline, 'can you suppose that I forget wherefore, and in whose rescue, these wounds were incurred? No, Damian, speak not of removal: while there is a turret of the Garde Doloureuse standing, within

that turret shall you find shelter and protection. Such, I am well assured, would be the pleasure of your uncle were he here in person.'

It seemed as if a sudden pang of his wound had seized upon Damian; for, repeating the words 'My uncle!' he writhed himself round, and averted his face from Eveline; then again composing himself, replied, 'Alas! knew my uncle how ill I have obeyed his precepts, instead of sheltering me within this house, he would command me to be flung from the battlements.'

'Fear not his displeasure,' said Eveline, again preparing to withdraw; 'but endeavour, by the composure of your spirit, to aid the healing of your wounds; when, I doubt not, you will be able again to establish good order in the Constable's jurisdiction, long before his return.'

She coloured as she pronounced the last words, and hastily left the apartment. When she was in her own chamber, she dismissed her other attendants, and retained Rose. 'What dost thou think of these things, my wise maiden and monitress?' said she.

'I would,' replied Rose, 'either that this young knight had never entered this castle, or that, being here, he could presently leave it, or that he could honourably remain here for ever.'

'What dost thou mean by remaining here for ever?' said Eveline, sharply and hastily.

'Let me answer that question with another — How long has the Constable of Chester been absent from England?'

'Three years come St. Clement's day,' said Eveline; 'and what of that?'

'Nay, nothing; but ——'

'But what? I command you to speak out.'

'A few weeks will place your hand at your own disposal.'

'And think you, Rose,' said Eveline, rising with dignity, 'that there are no bonds save those which are drawn by the scribe's pen? We know little of the Constable's adventures; but we know enough to show that his towering hopes have fallen, and his sword and courage proved too weak to change the fortunes of the Sultan Saladin. Suppose him returning some brief time hence, as we have seen so many crusaders regain their homes, poor and broken in health; suppose that he finds his lands laid waste, and his followers dispersed, by the consequence of their late misfortunes, how would it sound should he also find that his betrothed bride had wedded and endowed with

her substance the nephew whom he most trusted? Lost thou think such an engagement is like a Lombard's mortgage, which must be redeemed on the very day, else forfeiture is sure to be awarded?'

'I cannot tell, madam,' replied Rose; 'but they that keep their covenant to the letter are, in my country, held bound to no more.'

'That is a Flemish fashion, Rose,' said her mistress; 'but the honour of a Norman is not satisfied with an observance so limited. What! wouldst thou have my honour, my affections, my duty, all that is most valuable to a woman, depend on the same progress of the kalendar which an usurer watches for the purpose of seizing on a forfeited pledge? Am I such a mere commodity, that I must belong to one man if he claims me before Michaelmas, to another if he comes afterwards? No, Rose, I did not thus interpret my engagement, sanctioned as it was by the special providence of Our Lady of the Garde Doloureuse.'

'It is a feeling worthy of you, my dearest lady,' answered the attendant; 'yet you are so young, so beset with perils, so much exposed to calumny, that I, at least, looking forward to the time when you may have a legal companion and protector, see it as an extrication from much doubt and danger.'

'Do not think of it, Rose,' answered Eveline: 'do not liken your mistress to those provident dames who, while one husband yet lives, though in old age or weak health, are prudently engaged in plotting for another.'

'Enough, my dearest lady,' said Rose; 'yet not so. Permit me one word more. Since you are determined not to avail yourself of your freedom, even when the fatal period of your engagement is expired, why suffer this young man to share our solitude? He is surely well enough to be removed to some other place of security. Let us resume our former sequestered mode of life, until Providence send us some better or more certain prospects.'

Eveline sighed, looked down, then, looking upwards, once more had opened her lips to express her willingness to enforce so reasonable an arrangement, but for Damian's recent wounds, and the distracted state of the country, when she was interrupted by the shrill sound of trumpets, blown before the gate of the castle; and Raoul, with anxiety on his brow, came hurrying to inform his lady that a knight, attended by a pursuivant-at-arms, in the royal livery, with a strong guard, was in front

of the castle, and demanded admittance in the name of the king.

Eveline paused a moment ere she replied, 'Not even to the king's order shall the castle of my ancestors be opened, until we are well assured of the person by whom, and the purpose for which, it is demanded. We will ourself to the gate, and learn the meaning of this summons. My veil, Rose; and call my women. Again that trumpet sounds! Alas! it rings like a signal to death and ruin.'

The prophetic apprehensions of Eveline were not false; for scarce had she reached the door of the apartment, when she was met by the page Amelot, in a state of such disordered apprehension as an *élève* of chivalry was scarce on any occasion permitted to display. 'Lady — noble lady,' he said, hastily bending his knee to Eveline, 'save my dearest master. You, and you alone, can save him at this extremity.'

'I!' said Eveline, in astonishment — 'I save him! And from what danger? God knows how willingly!'

There she stopped short, as if afraid to trust herself with expressing what rose to her lips.

'Guy Monthermer, lady, is at the gate, with a pursuivant and the royal banner. The hereditary enemy of the house of Lacy, thus accompanied, comes hither for no good: the extent of the evil I know not, but for evil he comes. My master slew his nephew at the field of Malpas, and therefore ——' He was here interrupted by another flourish of trumpets, which rung, as if in shrill impatience, through the vaults of the ancient fortress.

The Lady Eveline hasted to the gate, and found that the wardens, and others who attended there, were looking on each other with doubtful and alarmed countenances, which they turned upon her at her arrival, as if to seek from their mistress the comfort and the courage which they could not communicate to each other. Without the gate, mounted and in complete armour, was an elderly and stately knight, whose raised visor and beaver depressed showed a beard already grizzled. Beside him appeared the pursuivant on horseback, the royal arms embroidered on his heraldic dress of office, and all the importance of offended consequence on his countenance, which was shaded by his barret-cap and triple plume. They were attended by a body of about fifty soldiers, arranged under the guidon of England.

When the Lady Eveline appeared at the barrier, the knight,

after a slight reverence, which seemed more in formal courtesy than in kindness, demanded if he saw the daughter of Raymond Berenger. 'And is it,' he continued, when he had received an answer in the affirmative, 'before the castle of that approved and favoured servant of the house of Anjou that King Henry's trumpets have thrice sounded without obtaining an entrance for those who are honoured with their sovereign's command?'

'My condition,' answered Eveline, 'must excuse my caution. I am a lone maiden, residing in a frontier fortress. I may admit no one without inquiring his purpose, and being assured that his entrance consists with the safety of the place and mine own honour.'

'Since you are so punctilious, lady,' replied Monthermer, 'know that, in the present distracted state of the country, it is his Grace the King's pleasure to place within your walls a body of men-at-arms sufficient to guard this important castle both from the insurgent peasants, who burn and slay, and from the Welsh, who, it must be expected, will, according to their wont in time of disturbance, make incursions on the frontiers. Undo your gates, then, Lady of Berenger, and suffer his Grace's forces to enter the castle.'

'Sir knight,' answered the lady, 'this castle, like every other fortress in England, is the king's by law; but by law also I am the keeper and defender of it, and it is the tenure by which my ancestors held these lands. I have men enough to maintain the Garde Doloureuse in my time, as my father, and my grandfather before him, defended it in theirs. The King is gracious to send me succours, but I need not the aid of hirelings: neither do I think it safe to admit such into my castle, [illegible] in this lawless time, make themselves masters of it for [illegible] its lawful mistress.'

'La[illegible]' the old warrior, 'his Grace is not ignorant of the [illegible] which produce a contumacy like this. It is not any apprehension for the royal forces which influences you, a royal vassal, in this refractory conduct. I might proceed upon your refusal to proclaim you a traitor to the crown, but the King remembers the services of your father. Know, then, we are not ignorant that Damian de Lacy, accused of instigating and heading this insurrection, of deserting his duty in the field, and abandoning a noble comrade to the sword of the brutal peasants, has found shelter under this roof, with little credit to your loyalty as a vassal, or your conduct as a high-

born maiden. Deliver him up to us, and I will draw off these men-at-arms, and dispense, though I may scarce answer doing so, with the occupation of the castle.'

'Guy de Monthermer,' answered Eveline, 'he that throws a stain on my name speaks falsely and unworthily; as for Damian de Lacy, he knows how to defend his own fame. This only let me say, that, while he takes his abode in the castle of the betrothed of his kinsman, she delivers him to no one, least of all to his well-known feudal enemy. Drop the portcullis, wardens, and let it not be raised without my special order.'

The portcullis, as she spoke, fell rattling and clanging to the ground, and Monthermer, in baffled spite, remained excluded from the castle. 'Unworthy lady ——' he began in passion, then checking himself, said calmly to the pursuivant, 'Ye are witness that she hath admitted that the traitor is within that castle; ye are witness that, lawfully summoned, this Eveline Berenger refuses to deliver him up. Do your duty, sir pursuivant, as is usual in such cases.'

The pursuivant then advanced and proclaimed, in the formal and fatal phrase befitting the occasion, that Eveline Berenger, lawfully summoned, refusing to admit the king's forces into her castle, and to deliver up the body of a false traitor, called Damian de Lacy, had herself incurred the penalty of high treason, and had involved within the same doom all who aided, abetted, or maintained her in holding out the said castle against their allegiance to Henry of Anjou. The trumpets, so soon as the voice of the herald had ceased, confirmed the doom he had pronounced by a long and ominous peal, startling from their nests the owl and the raven, who replied to it by their ill-boding screams.

The defenders of the castle looked on each other with blank and dejected countenances, while Monthermer, raising aloft his lance, exclaimed, as he turned his horse from the castle gate, 'When I next approach the Garde Dolourcuse, it will be not merely to intimate, but to execute, the mandate of my sovereign.'

As Eveline stood pensively to behold the retreat of Monthermer and his associates, and to consider what was to be done in this emergency, she heard one of the Flemings, in a low tone, ask an Englishman who stood beside him what was the meaning of a traitor.

'One who betrayeth a trust reposed — a betrayer,' said the interpreter.

The phrase which he used recalled to Eveline's memory her boding vision or dream. 'Alas!' she said, 'the vengeance of the fiend is about to be accomplished. Widow'd wife and wedded maid — these epithets have long been mine. Betrothed! — woe 's me! it is the keystone of my destiny. Betrayer I am now denounced, though, thank God, I am clear from the guilt! It only follows that I should be be ayed, and the evil prophecy will be fulfilled to the very letter.'

CHAPTER XXIX

Out on ye, owls. Nothing but songs of death?

Richard III.

MORE than three months had elapsed since the event narrated in the last chapter, and it had been the precursor of others of still greater importance, which will evolve themselves in the course of our narrative. But, as we profess to present to the reader not a precise detail of circumstances, according to their order and date, but a series of pictures, endeavouring to exhibit the most striking incidents before the eye or imagination of those whom it may concern, we thereto open a new scene, and bring other actors upon the stage.

Along a wasted tract of country, more than twelve miles distant from the Garde Doloureuse, in the heat of a summer noon, which shed a burning lustre on the silent valley and the blackened ruins of the cottages with which it had been once graced, two travellers walked slowly, whose palmer cloaks, pilgrims' staves, large slouched hats with a scallop shell bound on the front of each, above all, the cross, cut in red cloth upon their shoulders, marked them as pilgrims who had accomplished their vow, and had returned from that fatal bourne from which, in those days, returned so few of the thousands who visited it, whether in the love of enterprise or in the ardour of devotion.

The pilgrims had passed, that morning, through a scene of devastation similar to, and scarce surpassed in misery by, those which they had often trod during the wars of the Cross. They had seen hamlets which appeared to have suffered all the fury of military execution, the houses being burned to the ground; and in many cases the carcasses of the miserable inhabitants, or rather relics of such objects, were suspended on temporary gibbets, or on the trees, which had been allowed to remain standing only, it would seem, to serve the convenience of the executioners. Living creatures they saw none, excepting those wild denizens of nature who seemed silently resuming the now

wasted district, from which they might have been formerly expelled by the course of civilisation. Their ears were no less disagreeably occupied than their eyes. The pensive travellers might indeed hear the screams of the raven, as if lamenting the decay of the carnage on which he had been gorged, and now and then the plaintive howl of some dog, deprived of his home and master; but no sounds which argued either labour or domestication of any kind.

The sable figures who, with wearied steps, as it appeared, travelled through these scenes of desolation and ravage, seemed assimilated to them in appearance. They spoke not with each other, they looked not to each other; but one, the shorter of the pair, keeping about half a pace in front of his companion, they moved slowly, as priests returning from a sinner's death-bed, or rather as spectres flitting along the precincts of a churchyard.

At length they reached a grassy mound, on the top of which was placed one of those receptacles for the dead of the ancient British chiefs of distinction, called 'kistvaen,' which are composed of upright fragments of granite, so placed as to form a stone coffin, or something bearing that resemblance. The sepulchre had been long violated by the victorious Saxons, either in scorn or in idle curiosity, or because treasures were supposed to be sometimes concealed in such spots. The huge flat stone which had once been the cover of the coffin, if so it might be termed, lay broken in two pieces at some distance from the sepulchre, and, overgrown as the fragments were with grass and lichens, showed plainly that the lid had been removed to its present situation many years before. A stunted and doddered oak still spread its branches over the open and rude mausoleum, as if the Druids' badge and emblem, shattered and storm-broken, was still bending to offer its protection to the last remnant of their worship.

'This, then, is the kistvaen,' said the shorter pilgrim; 'and here we must abide tidings of our scout. But what, Philip Guarine, have we to expect as an explanation of the devastation which we have traversed?'

'Some incursion of the Welsh wolves, my lord,' replied Guarine; 'and, by Our Lady, here lies a poor Saxon sheep whom they have snapped up.'

The Constable — for he was the pilgrim who had walked foremost — turned as he heard his squire speak, and saw the corpse of a man amongst the long grass; by which, indeed, it

was so hidden that he himself had passed without notice what the esquire, in less abstracted mood, had not failed to observe. The leathern doublet of the slain bespoke him an English peasant; the body lay on its face, and the arrow which had caused his death still stuck in his back.

Philip Guarine, with the cool indifference of one accustomed to such scenes, drew the shaft from the man's back as composedly as he would have removed it from the body of a deer. With similar indifference the Constable signed to his esquire to give him the arrow, looked at it with indolent curiosity, and then said, 'Thou hast forgotten thy old craft, Guarine, when thou callest that a Welsh shaft. Trust me, it flew from a Norman bow; but why it should be found in the body of that English churl, I can ill guess.'

'Some runaway serf, I would warrant — some mongrel cur, who had joined the Welsh pack of hounds,' answered the esquire.

'It may be so,' said the Constable; 'but I rather augur some civil war among the Lords Marchers themselves. The Welsh, indeed, sweep the villages, and leave nothing behind them but blood and ashes, but here even castles seem to have been stormed and taken. May God send us good news of the Garde Doloureuse!'

'Amen!' replied his squire; 'but if Renault Vidal brings it, 't will be the first time he has proved a bird of good omen.'

'Philip,' said the Constable, 'I have already told thee thou art a jealous-pated fool. How many times has Vidal shown his faith in doubt, his address in difficulty, his courage in battle, his patience under suffering?'

'It may be all very true, my lord,' replied Guarine; 'yet — but what avails to speak? I own he has done you sometimes good service; but loth were I that your life or honour were at the mercy of Renault Vidal.'

'In the name of all the saints, thou peevish and suspicious fool, what is it thou canst found upon to his prejudice?'

'Nothing, my lord,' replied Guarine, 'but instinctive suspicion and aversion. The child that, for the first time, sees a snake knows nothing of its evil properties, yet he will not chase it and take it up as he would a butterfly; such is my dislike of Vidal, I cannot help it. I could pardon the man his malicious and gloomy sidelong looks, when he thinks no one observes him; but his sneering laugh I cannot forgive: it is like the beast we heard of in Judea, who laughs, they say, before he tears and destroys.'

'Philip,' said De Lacy, 'I am sorry for thee — sorry, from my soul, to see such a predominating and causeless jealousy occupy the brain of a gallant old soldier. Here, in this last misfortune, to recall no more ancient proofs of his fidelity, could he mean otherwise than well with us, when, thrown by shipwreck upon the coast of Wales, we would have been doomed to instant death, had the Cymry recognised in me the Constable of Chester, and in thee his trusty esquire, the executioner of his commands against the Welsh in so many instances?'

'I acknowledge,' said Philip Guarine, 'death had surely been our fortune, had not that man's ingenuity represented us as pilgrims, and, under that character, acted as our interpreter; and in that character he entirely precluded us from getting information from any one respecting the state of things here, which it behoved your lordship much to know, and which I must needs say looks gloomy and suspicious enough.'

'Still art thou a fool, Guarine,' said the Constable; 'for, look you, had Vidal meant ill by us, why should he not have betrayed us to the Welsh, or suffered us, by showing such knowledge as thou and I may have of their gibberish, to betray ourselves?'

'Well, my lord,' said Guarine, 'I may be silenced, but not satisfied. All the fair words he can speak, all the fine tunes he can play, Renault Vidal will be to my eyes ever a dark and suspicious man, with features always ready to mould themselves into the fittest form to attract confidence; with a tongue framed to utter the most flattering and agreeable words at one time, and at another to play shrewd plainness or blunt honesty; and an eye which, when he thinks himself unobserved, contradicts every assumed expression of features, every protestation of honesty, and every word of courtesy or cordiality to which his tongue has given utterance. But I speak not more on the subject; only I am an old mastiff, of the true breed: I love my master, but cannot endure some of those whom he favours; and yonder, as I judge, comes Vidal, to give us such an account of our situation as it shall please him.'

A horseman was indeed seen advancing in the path towards the kistvaen, with a hasty pace; and his dress, in which something of the Eastern fashion was manifest, with the fantastic attire usually worn by men of his profession, made the Constable aware that the minstrel, of whom they were speaking, was rapidly approaching them.

Although Hugo de Lacy rendered this attendant no more

than what in justice he supposed his services demanded, when he vindicated him from the suspicions thrown out by Guarine, yet at the bottom of his heart he had sometimes shared those suspicions, and was often angry at himself, as a just and honest man, for censuring, on the slight testimony of looks, and sometimes casual expressions, a fidelity which seemed to be proved by many acts of zeal and integrity.

When Vidal approached and dismounted to make his obeisance, his master hasted to speak to him in words of favour, as if conscious he had been partly sharing Guarine's unjust judgment upon him, by even listening to it. 'Welcome, my trusty Vidal,' he said; 'thou hast been the raven that fed us on the mountains of Wales, be now the dove that brings us good tidings from the marches. Thou art silent. What mean these downcast looks, that embarrassed carriage, that cap plucked down o'er thine eyes? In God's name, man, speak! Fear not for me: I can bear worse than tongue of man may tell. Thou hast seen me in the wars of Palestine, when my brave followers fell, man by man, around me, and when I was left wellnigh alone, and did I blench then? Thou hast seen me when the ship's keel lay grating on the rock, and the billows flew in foam over her deck, did I blench then? No, nor will I now.'

'Boast not,' said the minstrel, looking fixedly upon the Constable, as the former assumed the port and countenance of one who sets Fortune and her utmost malice at defiance — 'boast not, lest thy bands be made strong.'

There was a pause of a minute, during which the group formed at this instant a singular picture.

Afraid to ask, yet ashamed to *seem* to fear, the ill tidings which impended, the Constable confronted his messenger with person erect, arms folded, and brow expanded with resolution; while the minstrel, carried beyond his usual and guarded apathy by the interest of the moment, bent on his master a keen fixed glance, as if to observe whether his courage was real or assumed.

Philip Guarine, on the other hand, to whom Heaven, in assigning him a rough exterior, had denied neither sense nor observation, kept his eye in turn firmly fixed on Vidal, as if endeavouring to determine what was the character of that deep interest which gleamed in the minstrel's looks apparently, and was unable to ascertain whether it was that of a faithful domestic sympathetically agitated by the bad news with which he was about to afflict his master, or that of an executioner standing with his knife suspended over his victim, deferring

his blow until he should discover where it would be most sensibly felt. In Guarine's mind, prejudiced, perhaps, by the previous opinion he had entertained, the latter sentiment so decidedly predominated, that he longed to raise his staff and strike down to the earth the servant who seemed thus to enjoy the protracted sufferings of their common master.

At length a convulsive movement crossed the brow of the Constable, and Guarine, when he beheld a sardonic smile begin to curl Vidal's lip, could keep silence no longer. 'Vidal,' he said, 'thou art a——'

'A bearer of bad tidings,' said Vidal, interrupting him, 'therefore subject to the misconstruction of every fool who cannot distinguish between the author of harm and him who unwillingly reports it.'

'To what purpose this delay?' said the Constable. 'Come, sir minstrel, I will spare you a pang — Eveline has forsaken and forgotten me?'

The minstrel assented by a low inclination.

Hugo de Lacy paced a short turn before the stone monument, endeavouring to conquer the deep emotion which he felt. 'I forgive her,' he said. 'Forgive, did I say? Alas! I have nothing to forgive. She used but the right I left in her hand. Yes, our date of engagement was out; she had heard of my losses, my defeats, the destruction of my hopes, the expenditure of my wealth, and has taken the first opportunity which strict law afforded to break off her engagement with one bankrupt in fortune and fame. Many a maiden would have done — perhaps in prudence should have done — this; but that woman's name should not have been Eveline Berenger.'

He leaned on his esquire's arm, and for an instant laid his head on his shoulder with a depth of emotion which Guarine had never before seen him betray, and which, in awkward kindness, he could only attempt to console by bidding his master 'Be of good courage; he had lost but a woman.'

'This is no selfish emotion, Philip,' said the Constable, resuming self-command 'I grieve less that she has left me than that she has misjudged me: that she has treated me as the pawnbroker does his wretched creditor, who arrests the pledge as the very moment elapses within which it might have been relieved. Did she then think that I in my turn would have been a creditor so rigid — that I, who, since I knew her, scarce deemed myself worthy of her when I had wealth and fame, should insist on her sharing my diminished and degraded

fortunes? How little she ever knew me, or how selfish must she have supposed my misfortunes to have made me! But be it so; she is gone, and may she be happy! The thought that she disturbed me shall pass from my mind; and I will think she has done that which I myself, as her best friend, must in honour have advised.'

So saying, his countenance, to the surprise of his attendants, resumed its usual firm composure.

'I give you joy,' said the esquire, in a whisper to the minstrel; 'your evil news have wounded less deeply than, doubtless, you believed was possible.'

'Alas!' replied the minstrel, 'I have others and worse behind.'

This answer was made in an equivocal tone of voice, corresponding to the peculiarity of his manner, and, like that seeming emotion, of a deep but very doubtful character.

'Eveline Berenger is then married,' said the Constable; 'and, let me make a wild guess — she has not abandoned the family, though she has forsaken the individual — she is still a Lacy, ha? Dolt that thou art, wilt thou not understand me — she is married to Damian de Lacy — to my nephew?'

The effort with which the Constable gave breath to this supposition formed a strange contrast to the constrained smile to which he compelled his features while he uttered it. With such a smile a man about to drink poison might name a health, as he put the fatal beverage to his lips.

'No, my lord, not *married*,' answered the minstrel, with an emphasis on the word, which the Constable knew how to interpret.

'No — no,' he replied quickly, 'not married, perhaps, but engaged — troth-plighted. Wherefore not? The date of her old affiance was out, why not enter into a new engagement?'

'The Lady Eveline and Sir Damian de Lacy are not affianced that I know of,' answered his attendant.

This reply drove De Lacy's patience to extremity.

'Dog! dost thou trifle with me!' he exclaimed. 'Vile wire-pincher, thou torturest me! Speak the worst at once, or I will presently make thee minstrel to the household of Satan.'

Calm and collected did the minstrel reply — 'The Lady Eveline and Sir Damian are neither married nor affianced, my lord. They have loved and lived together — *par amours*.'

'Dog, and son of a dog,' said De Lacy, 'thou liest!' And, seizing the minstrel by the breast, the exasperated baron shook

him with his whole strength. But, great as that strength was, it was unable to stagger Vidal, a practised wrestler, in the firm posture which he had assumed, any more than his master's wrath could disturb the composure of the minstrel's bearing.

'Confess thou hast lied,' said the Constable, releasing him, after having effected by his violence no greater degree of agitation than the exertion of human force produces upon the rocking stones of the Druids, which may be shaken, indeed, but not displaced.

'Were a lie to buy my own life, yea, the lives of all my tribe,' said the minstrel, 'I would not tell one. But truth itself is ever termed falsehood when it counteracts the train of our passions.'

'Hear him, Philip Guarine — hear him!' exclaimed the Constable, turning hastily to his squire. 'He tells me of my disgrace — of the dishonour of my house — of the depravity of those whom I have loved the best in the world — he tells me of it with a calm look, an eye composed, an unfaltering tongue. Is this — can it be natural? Is De Lacy sunk so low, that his dishonour shall be told by a common strolling minstrel, as calmly as if it were a theme for a vain ballad? Perhaps thou wilt make it one, ha!' as he concluded, darting a furious glance at the minstrel.

'Perhaps I might, my lord,' replied the minstrel, 'were it not that I must record therein the disgrace of Renault Vidal, who served a lord without either patience to bear insults and wrongs or spirit to revenge them on the authors of his shame.'

'Thou art right — thou art right, good fellow,' said the Constable, hastily: 'it is vengeance now alone which is left us. And yet upon whom?'

As he spoke, he walked shortly and hastily to and fro; and, becoming suddenly silent, stood still and wrung his hands with deep emotion.

'I told thee,' said the minstrel to Guarine, 'that my muse would find a tender part at last. Dost thou remember the bull-fight we saw in Spain? A thousand little darts perplexed and annoyed the noble animal ere he received the last deadly thrust from the lance of the Moorish cavalier.'

'Man or fiend, be which thou wilt,' replied Guarine, 'that can thus drink in with pleasure and contemplate at your ease the misery of another, I bid thee beware of me. Utter thy cold-blooded taunts in some other ear; for if my tongue be blunt, I wear a sword that is sharp enough.'

'Thou hast seen me among swords,' answered the minstrel

'and knowest how little terror they have for such as I am.' Yet as he spoke he drew off from the esquire. He had, in fact, only addressed him in that sort of fulness of heart which would have vented itself in soliloquy if alone, and now poured itself out on the nearest auditor, without the speaker being entirely conscious of the sentiments which his speech excited.

Few minutes had elapsed before the Constable of Chester had regained the calm external semblance with which, until this last dreadful wound, he had borne all the inflictions of fortune. He turned towards his followers, and addressed the minstrel with his usual calmness, 'Thou art right, good fellow,' he said, 'in what thou saidst to me but now, and I forgive thee the taunt which accompanied thy good counsel. Speak out, in God's name, and speak to one prepared to endure the evil which God hath sent him. Certes a good knight is best known in battle, and a Christian in the time of trouble and adversity.'

The tone in which the Constable spoke seemed to produce a corresponding effect upon the deportment of his followers. The minstrel dropped at once the cynical and audacious tone in which he had hitherto seemed to tamper with the passions of his master; and in language simple and respectful, and which even approached to sympathy, informed him of the evil news which he had collected during his absence. It was indeed disastrous.

The refusal of the Lady Eveline Berenger to admit Montherner and his forces into her castle had of course given circulation and credence to all the calumnies which had been circulated to her prejudice and that of Damian de Lacy; and there were many who, for various causes, were interested in spreading and supporting these slanders. A large force had been sent into the country to subdue the insurgent peasants, and the knights and nobles despatched for that purpose failed not to avenge to the uttermost, upon the wretched plebeians, the noble blood which they had spilled during their temporary triumph.

The followers of the unfortunate Wenlock were infected with the same persuasion. Blamed by many for a hasty and cowardly surrender of a post which might have been defended, they endeavoured to vindicate themselves by alleging the hostile demonstrations of De Lacy's cavalry as the sole cause of their premature submission.

These rumours, supported by such interested testimony,

spread wide and far through the land; and, joined to the undeniable fact that Damian had sought refuge in the strong castle of Garde Doloureuse, which was now defending itself against the royal arms, animated the numerous enemies of the house of De Lacy, and drove its vassals and friends almost to despair, as men reduced either to disown their feudal allegiance or renounce that still more sacred fealty which they owed to their sovereign.

At this crisis they received intelligence that the wise and active monarch by whom the sceptre of England was then swayed was moving towards that part of England at the head of a large body of soldiers, for the purpose at once of pressing the siege of the Garde Doloureuse and completing the suppression of the insurrection of the peasantry, which Guy Monthermer had nearly accomplished.

In this emergency, and when the friends and dependants of the house of Lacy scarcely knew which hand to turn to, Randal, the Constable's kinsman, and, after Damian, his heir, suddenly appeared amongst them with a royal commission to raise and command such followers of the family as might not desire to be involved in the supposed treason of the Constable's delegate. In troublesome times men's vices are forgotten, provided they display activity, courage, and prudence, the virtues then most required; and the appearance of Randal, who was by no means deficient in any of these attributes, was received as a good omen by the followers of his cousin. They quickly gathered around him, surrendered to the royal mandate such strongholds as they possessed, and, to vindicate themselves from any participation in the alleged crimes of Damian, they distinguished themselves, under Randal's command, against such scattered bodies of peasantry as still kept the field or lurked in the mountains and passes; and conducted themselves with such severity after success as made the troops even of Monthermer appear gentle and clement in comparison of those of De Lacy. Finally, with the banner of his ancient house displayed, and five hundred good men assembled under it, Randal appeared before the Garde Doloureuse and joined Henry's camp there.

The castle was already hardly pressed, and the few defenders, disabled by wounds, watching, and privation, had now the additional discouragement to see displayed against their walls the only banner in England under which they had hoped forces might be mustered for their aid.

The high-spirited entreaties of Eveline, unbent by adversity and want, gradually lost effect on the defenders of the castle; and proposals for surrender were urged and discussed by a tumultuary council, into which not only the inferior officers, but many of the common men, had thrust themselves, as in a period of such general distress as unlooses all the bonds of discipline, and leaves each man at liberty to speak and act for himself. To their surprise, in the midst of their discussions, Damian de Lacy, arisen from the sick-bed to which he had been so long confined, appeared among them, pale and feeble, his cheek tinged with the ghastly look which is left by long illness; he leaned on his page Amelot. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'and soldiers — yet why should I call you either? Gentlemen are ever ready to die in behalf of a lady, soldiers hold life scorn compared to their honour.'

'Out upon him — out upon him!' exclaimed one of the soldiers, interrupting him; 'he would have us, who are innocent, die the death of traitors, and be hanged in our armour over the walls, rather than part with his leman.'

'Peace, irreverent slave!' said Damian, in a voice like thunder, 'or my last blow shall be a mean one, aimed against such a caitiff as thou art. And you, he continued, addressing the rest — 'you, who are shrinking from the toils of your profession, because, if you persist in a course of honour, death may close them a few years sooner than it needs must — you, who are scared like children at the sight of a death's-head, do not suppose that Damian de Lacy would desire to shelter himself at the expense of those lives which you hold so dear. Make your bargain with King Henry. Deliver me up to his justice, or his severity; or, if you like it better, strike my head from my body, and hurl it, as a peace-offering, from the walls of the castle. To God, in His good time, will I trust for the clearance of mine honour. In a word, surrender me, dead or alive, or open the gates and permit me to surrender myself. Only, as ye are men, since I may not say better of ye, care at least for the safety of your mistress, and make such terms as may secure HER safety, and save yourselves from the dishonour of being held cowardly and perjured caitiffs in your graves.'

'Methinks the youth speaks well and reasonably,' said Wilkin Flammock. 'Let us e'en make a grace of surrendering his body up to the King, and assure thereby such terms as we can for ourselves and the lady, ere the last morsel of our provision is consumed.'

'I would hardly have proposed this measure,' said, or rather mumbled, Father Aldrovand, who had recently lost four of his front teeth by a stone from a sling—'yet, being so generously offered by the party principally concerned, I hold with the learned scholiast, *Volenti non fit injuria*.'

'Priest and Fleming,' said the old bannerman, Ralph Genvil, 'I see how the wind stirreth you; but you deceive yourselves if you think to make our young master, Sir Damian, a scapegoat for your light lady. Nay, never frown nor fume, Sir Damian; if you know not your safest course, we know it for you. Followers of De Lacy, throw yourselves on your horses, and two men on one, if it be necessary; we will take this stubborn boy in the midst of us, and the dainty squire Amelot shall be prisoner too, if he trouble us with his peevish opposition. Then let us make a fair sally upon the siegers. Those who can cut their way through will shift well enough; those who fall will be provided for.'

A shout from the troopers of Lacy's band approved this proposal. Whilst the followers of Berenger expostulated in loud and angry tone, Eveline, summoned by the tumult, in vain endeavoured to appease it; and the anger and entreaties of Damian were equally lost on his followers. To each and either the answer was the same.

'Have you no care of it. Because you love *par amours*, is it reasonable you should throw away your life and ours?' So exclaimed Genvil to De Lacy; and in softer language, but with equal obstinacy, the followers of Raymond Berenger refused on the present occasion to listen to the commands or prayers of his daughter.

Wilkin Flammock had retreated from the tumult when he saw the turn which matters had taken. He left the castle by a sally-port, of which he had been entrusted with the key, and proceeded without observation or opposition to the royal camp, where he requested access to the sovereign. This was easily obtained, and Wilkin speedily found himself in the presence of King Henry. The monarch was in his royal pavilion, attended by two of his sons, Richard and John, who afterwards swayed the sceptre of England with very different auspices.

'How now? What art thou?' was the royal question.

'An honest man, from the castle of the Garde Doloureuse.'

'Thou mayst be honest,' replied the sovereign, 'but thou comest from a nest of traitors.'

'Such as they are, my lord, it is my purpose to put them at your royal disposal; for they have no longer the wisdom to guide themselves, and lack alike prudence to hold out and grace to submit. But I would first know of your Grace to what terms you will admit the defenders of yonder garrison?'

'To such as kings give to traitors,' said Henry, sternly — 'sharp knives and tough cords.'

'Nay, my gracious lord, you must be kinder than that amounts to, if the castle is to be rendered by my means; else will your cords and knives have only my poor body to work upon, and you will be as far as ever from the inside of the Garde Doloureuse.'

The King looked at him fixedly. 'Thou knowest,' he said, 'the law of arms: here, provost-marshal, stands a traitor and yonder stands a tree.'

'And here is a throat,' said the stout-hearted Fleming, unbuttoning the collar of his doublet.

'By mine honour,' said Prince Richard, 'a sturdy and faithful yeoman! It were better send such fellows their dinner, and then buffet it out with them for the castle, than to starve them as the beggarly Frenchmen famish their hounds.'

'Peace, Richard,' said his father; 'thy wit is over green, and thy blood over hot, to make thee my counsellor here. And you, knave, speak you some reasonable terms, and we will not be over strict with thee.'

'First, then,' said the Fleming, 'I stipulate full and free pardon for life, limb, body, and goods to me, Wilkin Flammock, and my daughter Rose.'

'A true Fleming,' said Prince John; 'he takes care of himself in the first instance.'

'His request,' said the King, 'is reasonable. What next?'

'Safety in life, honour, and land for the demoiselle Eveline Berenger.'

'How, sir knave!' said the King, angrily, 'is it for such as thou to dictate to our judgment or clemency in the case of a noble Norman lady? Confine thy mediation to such as thyself; or rather render us this castle without farther delay, and be assured thy doing so will be of more service to the traitors within than weeks more of resistance, which must and shall be bootless.'

The Fleming stood silent, unwilling to surrender without some specific terms, yet half convinced, from the situation in which he had left the garrison of the Garde Doloureuse, that

his admitting the king's forces would be, perhaps, the best he could do for Lady Eveline.

'I like thy fidelity, fellow,' said the King, whose acute eye perceived the struggle in the Fleming's bosom; 'but carry not thy stubbornness too far. Have we not said we will be gracious to yonder offenders, as far as our royal duty will permit?'

'And, royal father,' said Prince John, interposing, 'I pray you let me have the grace to take first possession of the Garde Doloureuse, and the wardship or forfeiture of the offending lady.'

'*I* pray you also, my royal father, to grant John's boon,' said his brother Richard, in a tone of mockery. 'Consider, royal father, it is the first desire he hath shown to approach the barriers of the castle, though we have attacked them forty times at least. Marry, cross-bow and mangonel were busy on the former occasions, and it is like they will be silent now.'

'Peace, Richard,' said the King; 'your words, aimed at thy brother's honour, pierce my heart. John, thou hast thy boon as concerns the castle; for this unhappy young lady, we will take her in our own charge. Fleming, how many men wilt thou undertake to admit?'

Ere Flammock could answer, a squire approached Prince Richard, and whispered in his ear, yet so as to be heard by all present, 'We have discovered that some internal disturbance, or other cause unknown, has withdrawn many of the warders from the castle walls, and that a sudden attack might ——'

'Dost thou hear that, John?' exclaimed Richard. 'Ladders, man — get ladders, and to the wall. How I should delight to see thee on the highest round — thy knees shaking, thy hands grasping convulsively, like those of one in an ague fit — all air around thee, save a baton or two of wood — the moat below — half a dozen pikes at thy throat ——'

'Peace, Richard, for shame, if not for charity!' said his father, in a tone of anger, mingled with grief. 'And thou, John, get ready for the assault.'

'As soon as I have put on my armour, father,' answered the prince; and withdrew slowly, with a visage so blank as to promise no speed in his preparations.

His brother laughed as he retired, and said to his squire, 'It were no bad jest, Alberick, to carry the place ere John can change his silk doublet for a steel one.'

So saying, he hastily withdrew, and his father exclaimed in paternal distress, 'Out, alas! as much too hot as his brother is

too cold; but it is the manlier fault. Gloucester,' said he to that celebrated earl, 'take sufficient strength and follow Prince Richard, to guard and sustain him. If any one can rule him, it must be a knight of thy established fame. Alas! alas! for what sin have I deserved the affliction of these cruel family feuds?'

'Be comforted, my lord,' said the chancellor, who was also in attendance.

'Speak not of comfort to a father whose sons are at discord with each other, and agree only in their disobedience to him!'

Thus spoke Henry the Second, than whom no wiser, or, generally speaking, more fortunate monarch ever sat upon the throne of England; yet whose life is a striking illustration how family dissensions can tarnish the most brilliant lot to which Heaven permits humanity to aspire, and how little gratified ambition, extended power, and the highest reputation in war and in peace can do towards curing the wounds of domestic affliction.

The sudden and fiery attack of Richard, who hastened to the escalade at the head of a score of followers, collected at random, had the complete effect of surprise; and having surmounted the walls with their ladders, before the contending parties within were almost aware of the assault, the assailants burst open the gates, and admitted Gloucester, who had hastily followed with a strong body of men-at-arms. The garrison, in their state of surprise, confusion, and disunion, offered little resistance, and would have been put to the sword, and the place plundered, had not Henry himself entered it, and, by his personal exertions and authority, restrained the excesses of the dissolute soldiery.

The King conducted himself, considering the times and the provocation, with laudable moderation. He contented himself with disarming and dismissing the common soldiers, giving them some trifle to carry them out of the country, lest want should lead them to form themselves into bands of robbers. The officers were more severely treated, being for the greater part thrown into dungeons, to abide the course of the law. In particular, imprisonment was the lot of Damian de Lacy, against whom, believing the various charges with which he was loaded, Henry was so highly incensed, that he purposed to make him an example to all false knights and disloyal subjects. To the Lady Eveline Berenger he assigned her own apartment as a prison, in which she was honourably attended by Rose and

Alice, but guarded with the utmost strictness. It was generally reported that her demesnes would be declared a forfeiture to the crown, and bestowed, at least in part, upon Randal de Lacy, who had done good service during the siege. Her person, it was thought, was destined to the seclusion of some distant French nunnery, where she might at leisure repent her of her follies and her rashness.

Father Aldrovand was delivered up to the discipline of his convent, long experience having very effectually taught Henry the imprudence of infringing on the privileges of the church; although, when the King first beheld him with a rusty corslet clasped over his frock, he with difficulty repressed the desire to cause him to be hanged over the battlements, to preach to the ravens.

With Wilkin Flammock, Henry held much conference, particularly on the subject of manufactures and commerce; on which the sound-headed, though blunt-spoken, Fleming was well qualified to instruct an intelligent monarch. 'Thy intentions,' he said, 'shall not be forgotten, good fellow, though they have been anticipated by the headlong valour of my son Richard, which has cost some poor caitiffs their lives: Richard loves not to sheathe a bloodless weapon. But thou and thy countrymen shall return to thy mills yonder, with a full pardon for past offences, so that you meddle no more with such treasonable matters.'

'And our privileges and duties, my liege?' said Flammock. 'Your Majesty knows well we are vassals to the lord of this castle, and must follow him in battle.'

'It shall no longer be so,' said Henry: 'I will form a community of Flemings here, and thou, Flammock, shalt be mayor, that thou mayst not plead feudal obedience for a relapse into treason.'

'Treason, my liege!' said Flammock, longing, yet scarce venturing, to interpose a word in behalf of Lady Eveline, for whom, despite the constitutional coolness of his temperament, he really felt much interest — 'I would that your Grace but justly knew how many threads went to that woof.'

'Peace, sirrah! meddle with your loom,' said Henry; 'and if we deign to speak to thee concerning the mechanical arts which thou dost profess, take it for no warrant to intrude farther on our privacy.'

The Fleming retired, rebuked, and in silence; and the fate of the unhappy prisoners remained in the King's bosom. He

himself took up his lodging in the castle of the Garde Doloureuse, as a convenient station for sending abroad parties to suppress and extinguish all the embers of rebellion ; and so active was Randal de Lacy on these occasions, that he appeared daily to rise in the King's grace, and was gratified with considerable grants out of the domains of Berenger and Lacy, which the King seemed already to treat as forfeited property. Most men considered this growing favour of Randal as a perilous omen, both for the life of young De Lacy and for the fate of the unfortunate Eveline.

CHAPTER XXX

A vow, a vow — I have a vow in Heaven.
Shall I bring perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.

Merchant of Venice.

THE conclusion of the last chapter contains the tidings with which the minstrel greeted his unhappy master, Hugo de Lacy; not indeed with the same detail of circumstances with which we have been able to invest the narrative, but so as to infer the general and appalling facts, that his betrothed bride and beloved and trusted kinsman had leagued together for his dishonour, had raised the banner of rebellion against their lawful sovereign, and, failing in their audacious attempt, had brought the life of one of them, at least, into the most imminent danger, and the fortunes of the house of Lacy, unless some instant remedy could be found, to the very verge of ruin.

Vidal marked the countenance of his master as he spoke, with the same keen observation which the chirurgeon gives to the progress of his dissecting-knife. There was grief on the Constable's features — deep grief, but without the expression of abasement or prostration which usually accompanies it; anger and shame were there, but they were both of a noble character, seemingly excited by his bride and nephew's transgressing the laws of allegiance, honour, and virtue, rather than by the disgrace and damage which he himself sustained through their crime.

The minstrel was so much astonished at this change of deportment from the sensitive acuteness of agony which attended the beginning of his narrative, that he stepped back two paces, and gazing on the Constable with wonder, mixed with admiration, exclaimed, 'We have heard of martyrs in Palestine, but this exceeds them!'

'Wonder not so much, good friend,' said the Constable, patiently; 'it is the first blow of the lance or mace which pierces or stuns; those which follow are little felt.' [1]

'Think, my lord,' said Vidal, 'all is lost — love, dominion, high office, and bright fame: so late a chief among nobles, now a poor palmer!'

'Wouldst thou make sport with my misery?' said Hugo, sternly; 'but even that comes, of course, behind my back, and why should it not be endured when said to my face? Know, then, minstrel, and put it in song if you list, that Hugo de Lacy, having lost all he carried to Palestine, and all which he left at home, is still lord of his own mind; and adversity can no more shake him than the breeze which strips the oak of its leaves can tear up the trunk by the roots.'

'Now, by the tomb of my father,' said the minstrel, rapturously, 'this man's nobleness is too much for my resolve!' and stepping hastily to the Constable, he kneeled on one knee, and caught his hand more freely than the state maintained by men of De Lacy's rank usually permitted.

'Here,' said Vidal, 'on this hand — this noble hand, I renounce ——'

But, ere he could utter another word, Hugo de Lacy, who, perhaps, felt the freedom of the action as an intrusion on his fallen condition, pulled back his hand, and bid the minstrel, with a stern frown, arise, and remember that misfortune made not De Lacy a fit personage for a mummery.

Renault Vidal rose rebuked. 'I had forgot,' he said, 'the distance between an Armorican violer and a high Norman baron. I thought that the same depth of sorrow, the same burst of joy, levelled, for a moment at least, those artificial barriers by which men are divided. But it is well as it is. Live within the limits of your rank, as heretofore within your donjon tower and your fosses, my lord, undisturbed by the sympathy of any mean man like me. I, too, have my duties to discharge.'

'And now to the Garde Doloureuse,' said the baron, turning to Philip Guarine — 'God knoweth how well it deserveth the name! — there to learn, with our own eyes and ears, the truth of these woeful tidings. Dismount, minstrel, and give me thy palfrey. I would, Guarine, that I had one for thee; as for Vidal, his attendance is less necessary. I will face my foes, or my misfortunes, like a man — that be assured of, violer; and look not so sullen, knave — I will not forget old adherents.'

[1] See Sensibility to Pain. Note 12.

'One of them, at least, will not forget you, my lord,' replied the minstrel, with his usual dubious tone of look and emphasis.

But, just as the Constable was about to prick forwards, two persons appeared on the path, mounted on one horse, who, hidden by some dwarf-wood, had come very near them without being perceived. They were male and female; and the man, who rode foremost, was such a picture of famine as the eyes of the pilgrims had scarce witnessed in all the wasted lands through which they had travelled. His features, naturally sharp and thin, had disappeared almost entirely among the uncombed grey beard and hairs with which they were overshadowed; and it was but the glimpse of a long nose, that seemed as sharp as the edge of a knife, and the twinkling sparkle of his grey eyes, which gave any intimation of his lineaments. His leg, in the wide old boot which inclosed it, looked like the handle of a mop left by chance in a pail; his arms were about the thickness of riding-rods; and such parts of his person as were not concealed by the tatters of a huntsman's cassock seemed rather the appendages of a mummy than a live man.

The female who sat behind this spectre exhibited also some symptoms of extenuation; but, being a brave, jolly dame naturally, famine had not been able to render her a spectacle so rueful as the anatomy behind which she rode. Dame Gillian's cheek (for it was the reader's old acquaintance) had indeed lost the rosy hue of good cheer and the smoothness of complexion which art and easy living had formerly substituted for the more delicate bloom of youth; her eyes were sunken, and had lost much of their bold and roguish lustre; but she was still in some measure herself, and the remnants of former finery, together with the tight-drawn scarlet hose, though sorely faded, showed still a remnant of coquettish pretension.

So soon as she came within sight of the pilgrims, she began to punch Raoul with the end of her riding-rod. 'Try thy new trade, man, since thou art unfit for any other — to the good men — to them, crave their charity.'

'Beg from beggars!' muttered Raoul; 'that were hawking at sparrows, dame.'

'It will bring our hand in use though,' said Gillian; and commenced, in a whining tone, 'God love you, holy men, who have had the grace to go to the Holy Land, and, what is more, have had the grace to come back again — I pray, bestow some of your alms upon my poor old husband, who is a

miserable object, as you see, and upon one who has the bad luck to be his wife — Heaven help me!'

'Peace, woman, and hear what I have to say,' said the Constable, laying his hand upon the bridle of the horse. 'I have present occasion for that horse, and ——'

'By the hunting-horn of St. Hubert, but thou gettest him not without blows!' answered the old huntsman. 'A fine world it is, when palmers turn horse-stealers.'

'Peace, fellow!' said the Constable, sternly. 'I say I have occasion presently for the service of thy horse. Here be two gold bezants for a day's use of the brute; it is well worth the fee-simple of him, were he never returned.'

'But the palfrey is an old acquaintance, master,' said Raoul; 'and if perchance ——'

'Out upon "if" and "perchance" both,' said the dame, giving her husband so determined a thrust as wellnigh pushed him out of the saddle. 'Off the horse! and thank God and this worthy man for the help He has sent us in extremity. What signifies the palfrey, when we have not enough to get food either for the brute or ourselves, not though we would eat grass and corn with him, like King Somebody, whom the good father used to read us to sleep about?'

'A truce with your prating, dame,' said Raoul, offering his assistance to help her from the croupe; but she preferred that of Guarine, who, though advanced in years, retained the advantage of his stout soldierly figure.

'I humbly thank your goodness,' said she, as, having first kissed her, the squire set her on the ground. 'And pray, sir, are ye come from the Holy Land? Heard ye any tidings there of him that was Constable of Chester?'

De Lacy, who was engaged in removing the pillion from behind the saddle, stopped short in his task, and said, 'Ha, dame! what would you with him?'

'A great deal, good palmer, an I could light on him, for his lands and offices are all to be given, it 's like, to that false thief, his kinsman.'

'What! to Damian, his nephew?' exclaimed the Constable, in a harsh and hasty tone.

'Lord, how you startle me, sir!' said Gillian; then continued, turning to Philip Guarine, 'Your friend is a hasty man, belike.'

'It is the fault of the sun he has lived under so long,' said the squire; 'but look you answer his questions truly, and he will make it the better for you.'

Gillian instantly took the hint. 'Was it Damian de Lacy you asked after? Alas! poor young gentleman! no offices or lands for him; more likely to have a gallows-cast, poor lad, and all for nought, as I am a true dame. Damian! no — no, it is not Damian, nor damson neither, but Randal Lacy, that must rule the roast, and have all the old man's lands, and livings, and lordships.'

'What!' said the Constable, 'before they know whether the old man is dead or no? Methinks that were against law and reason both.'

'Ay, but Randal Lacy has brought about less likely matters. Look you, he hath sworn to the King that they have true tidings of the Constable's death; ay, and let him alone to make them soothfast enough, if the Constable were once within his danger.'

'Indeed!' said the Constable. 'But you are forging tales on a noble gentleman. Come — come, dame, you say this because you like not Randal Lacy.'

'Like him not! And what reason have I to like him, I trow?' answered Gillian. 'Is it because he seduced my simplicity to let him into the castle of the Garde Doloureuse — ay, oftener than once or twice either — when he was disguised as a pedlar, and told him all the secrets of the family, and how the boy Damian and the girl Eveline were dying of love with each other, but had not courage to say a word of it for fear of the Constable, though he were a thousand miles off? You seem concerned, worthy sir; may I offer your reverend worship a trifling sup from my bottle, which is sovereign for *tremor cordis* and fits of the spleen?'

'No — no,' ejaculated De Lacy; 'I was but grieved with the shooting of an old wound. But, dame, I warrant me this Damian and Eveline, as you call them, became better, closer friends in time?'

'They! not they indeed, poor simpletons!' answered the dame; 'they wanted some wise counsellor to go between and advise them. For, look you, sir, if old Hugo be dead, as is most like, it were more natural that his bride and his nephew should inherit his lands than this same Randal, who is but a distant kinsman, and a forsworn caitiff to boot. Would you think it, reverend pilgrim, after the mountains of gold he promised me, when the castle was taken, and he saw I could serve him no more, he called me old beldame, and spoke of the beadle and the cucking-stool? Yes, reverend sir, old

beldame and cucking-stool were his best words when he knew I had no one to take my part save old Raoul, who cannot take his own. But if grim old Hugo bring back his weather-beaten carcass from Palestine, and have but half the devil in him which he had when he was fool enough to go away, St. Mary, but I will do his kinsman's office to him!'

There was a pause when she had done speaking

'Thou say'st,' at length exclaimed the Constable, 'that Damian de Lacy and Eveline love each other, yet are unconscious of guilt, or falsehood, or ingratitude to me — I would say, to their relative in Palestine?'

'Love, sir! in troth and so it is. They do love each other,' said Gillian, 'but it is like angels, or like lambs — or like fools, if you will; for they would never so much as have spoken together, but for a prank of that same Randal Lacy's.'

'How!' demanded the Constable — 'a prank of Randal's? What motive had he that these two should meet?'

'Nay, their meeting was none of his seeking; but he had formed a plan to carry off the Lady Eveline himself, for he was a wild rover, this same Randal, and so he came disguised as a merchant of falcons, and trained out my old stupid Raoul, and the Lady Eveline, and all of us, as if to have an hour's mirth in hawking at the heron. But he had a band of Welsh kites in readiness to pounce upon us; and, but for the sudden making in of Damian to our rescue, it is undescribable to think what might have come of us; and Damian, being hurt in the onslaught, was carried to the Garde Doloureuse in mere necessity; and but to save his life, it is my belief my lady would never have asked him to cross the drawbridge, even if he had offered.'

'Woman,' said the Constable, 'think what thou say'st! If thou hast done evil in these matters heretofore, as I suspect from thine own story, think not to put it right by a train of new falsehoods, merely from spite at missing thy reward.'

'Palmer,' said old Raoul, with his broken-toned voice, cracked by many a halloo, 'I am wont to leave the business of tale-bearing to my wife Gillian, who will tongue-pad it with any shrew in Christendom. But thou speak'st like one having some interest in these matters, and therefore I will tell thee plainly, that, although this woman has published her own shame in avowing her correspondence with that same Randal Lacy, yet what she has said is true as the Gospel; and, were it my last word, I would say that Damian and the Lady Eveline

are innocent of all treason and all dishonesty, as is the babe unborn. But what avails what the like of us say, who are even driven to the very begging for mere support, after having lived at a good house and in a good lord's service — blessing be with him!'

'But hark you,' continued the Constable, 'are there left no ancient servants of the house, that could speak out as well as you?'

'Humph!' answered the huntsman, 'men are not willing to babble wh. . Randal Lacy is cracking his thong above their heads. Many are slain or starved to death, some disposed of, some spirited away. But there are the weaver Flammock and his daughter Rose, who know as much of the matter as we do.'

'What! Wilkin Flammock, the stout Netherlander,' said the Constable — 'he and his blunt but true daughter Rose? I will venture my life on their faith. Where dwell they? What has been their lot amidst these changes?'

'And in God's name who are *you* that ask these questions?' said Dame Gillian. 'Husband — husband, we have been too free; there is something in that look and that tone which I should remember.'

'Yes, look at me more fixedly,' said the Constable, throwing back the hood which had hitherto in a great degree obscured his features.

'On your knees — on your knees, Raoul,' exclaimed Gillian, dropping on her own at the same time; 'it is the Constable himself, and he has heard me call him old Hugo!'

'It is all that is left of him who was the Constable, at least,' replied De Lacy; 'and old Hugo willingly forgives your freedom, in consideration of your good news. Where are Flammock and his daughter?'

'Rose is with the Lady Eveline,' said Dame Gillian; 'her ladyship, belike, chose her for bower-woman in place of me, although Rose was never fit to attire so much as a Dutch doll.'

'The faithful girl!' said the Constable. 'And where is Flammock?'

'Oh, for him, he has pardon and favour from the King,' said Raoul, 'and is at his own house, with his rabble of weavers, close beside the Battlebridge, as they now call the place where your lordship quelled the Welsh.'

'Thither will I then,' said the Constable; 'and will then

see what welcome King Henry of Anjou has for an old servant. You two must accompany me.'

'My lord,' said Gillian, with hesitation, 'you know poor folk are little thanked for interference with great men's affairs. I trust your lordship will be able to protect us if we speak the truth, and that you will not look back with displeasure on what I did, acting for the best.'

'Peace, dame, with a wanion to ye!' said Raoul. 'Will you think of your own old sinful carcass, when you should be saving your sweet young mistress from shame and oppression? And for thy ill tongue, and worse practices, his lordship knows they are bred in the bone of thee.'

'Peace, good fellow!' said the Constable; 'we will not look back on thy wife's errors, and your fidelity shall be rewarded. For you, my faithful followers,' he said, turning towards Guarine and Vidal, 'when De Lacy shall receive his rights, of which he doubts nothing, his first wish shall be to reward your fidelity.'

'Mine, such as it is, has been and shall be its own reward,' said Vidal. 'I will not accept favours from him in prosperity who in adversity refused me his hand: our account stands yet open.'

'Go to, thou art a fool; but thy profession hath a privilege to be humorous,' said the Constable, whose weather-beaten and homely features looked even handsome when animated by gratitude to Heaven and benevolence towards mankind. 'We will meet,' he said, 'at Battlebridge, an hour before [after] vespers; I shall have much achieved before that time.'

'The space is short,' said his esquire.

'I have won a battle in yet shorter,' replied the Constable.

'In which,' said the minstrel, 'many a man has died that thought himself well assured of life and victory.'

'Even so shall my dangerous cousin Randal find his schemes of ambition blighted,' answered the Constable; and rode forwards, accompanied by Raoul and his wife, who had remounted their palfrey, while the minstrel and squire followed a-foot, and, of course, much more slowly.

CHAPTER XXXI

Oh, fear not, fear not, good Lord John,
That I would you betray,
Or sue requital for a debt,
Which nature cannot pay.

Bear witness, all ye sacred powers,
Ye lights that 'gin to shine,
This night shall prove the sacred tie
That binds your faith and mine.

Ancient Scottish Ballad.

LEFT behind by their master, the two dependants of Hugo de Lacy marched on in sullen silence, like men who dislike and distrust each other, though bound to one common service, and partners, therefore, in the same hopes and fears. The dislike, indeed, was chiefly upon Guarine's side, for nothing could be more indifferent to Renault Vidal than was his companion, farther than as he was conscious that Philip loved him not, and was not unlikely, so far as lay in his power, to thwart some plans which he had nearly at heart. He took little notice of his companion, but hummed over to himself, as for the exercise of his memory, romances and songs, many of which were composed in languages which Guarine, who had only an ear for his native Norman, did not understand.

They had proceeded together in this sullen manner for nearly two hours, when they were met by a groom on horseback, leading a saddled palfrey. 'Pilgrims,' said the man, after looking at them with some attention, 'which of you is called Philip Guarine?'

'I, for fault of a better,' said the esquire, 'reply to that name.'

'Thy lord, in that case, commends him to you,' said the groom; 'and sends you this token, by which you shall know that I am his true messenger.'

He showed the esquire a rosary, which Philip instantly recognised as that used by the Constable.

'I acknowledge the token,' he said; 'speak my master's pleasure.'

'He bids me say,' replied the rider, 'that his visit thrives as well as is possible, and that this very evening, by time that the sun sets, he will be possessed of his own. He desires, therefore, you will mount this palfrey, and come with me to the Garde Doloureuse, as your presence will be wanted there.'

'It is well, and I obey him,' said the esquire, much pleased with the import of the message, and not dissatisfied at being separated from his travelling companion.

'And what charge for me?' said the minstrel, addressing the messenger.

'If you, as I guess, are the minstrel, Renault Vidal, you are to abide your master at the Battlebridge, according to the charge formerly given.'

'I will meet him, as in duty bound,' was Vidal's answer; and scarce was it uttered, ere the two horsemen, turning their backs on him, rode briskly forward, and were speedily out of sight.

It was now four hours past noon, and the sun was declining, yet there was more than three hours' space to the time of rendezvous, and the distance from the place did not now exceed four miles. Vidal, therefore, either for the sake of rest or reflection, withdrew from the path into a thicket on the left hand, from which gushed the waters of a streamlet, fed by a small fountain that bubbled up amongst the trees. Here the traveller sat himself down, and with an air which seemed unconscious of what he was doing, bent his eye on the little sparkling font for more than half an hour, without change of posture; so that he might, in pagan times, have represented the statue of a water-god bending over his urn, and attentive only to the supplies which it was pouring forth. At length, however, he seemed to recall himself from this state of deep abstraction, drew himself up, and took some coarse food from his pilgrim's scrip, as if suddenly reminded that life is not supported without means. But he had probably something at his heart which affected his throat or appetite. After a vain attempt to swallow a morsel, he threw it from him in disgust, and applied him to a small flask, in which he had some wine or other liquor. But seemingly this also turned distasteful, for he threw from him both scrip and bottle, and, bending down to the spring, drank deeply of the pure element, bathed in it his hands and face, and, arising from the fountain apparently refreshed, moved

slowly on his way, singing as he went, but in a low and saddened tone, wild fragments of ancient poetry, in a tongue equally ancient.

Journeying on in this melancholy manner, he at length came in sight of the Battlebridge; near to which arose, in proud and gloomy strength, the celebrated castle of the Garde Dolourouse. 'Here, then,' he said — 'here, then, I am to await the proud De Lacy. Be it so, in God's name! he shall know me better ere we part.'

So saying, he strode, with long and resolved steps, across the bridge, and ascending a mound which arose on the opposite side at some distance, he gazed for a time upon the scene beneath — the beautiful river, rich with the reflected tints of the western sky; the trees, which were already brightened to the eye, and saddened to the fancy, with the hue of autumn; and the darksome walls and towers of the feudal castle, from which, at times, flashed a glimpse of splendour, as some sentinel's arms caught and gave back a transient ray of the setting sun.

The countenance of the minstrel, which had hitherto been dark and troubled, seemed softened by the quiet of the scene. He threw loose his pilgrim's dress, yet suffering part of its dark folds to hang around him mantle-wise; under which appeared his minstrel's tabard. He took from his side a rote, and striking, from time to time, a Welsh descant, sung at others a lay, of which we can offer only a few fragments, literally translated from the ancient language in which they were chanted, premising that they are in that excursive symbolical style of poetry which Taliessin, Llewarch Hen, and other bards had derived perhaps from the time of the Druids.

I asked of my harp, 'Who hath injured thy chords?'
And she replied, 'The crooked finger, which I mocked in my tune.'
A blade of silver may be bended; a blade of steel abideth.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

The sweet taste of mead passeth from the lips;
But they are long corroded by the juice of wormwood.
The lamb is brought to the shambles, but the wolf rangeth the mountain.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

I asked the red-hot iron, when it glimmered on the anvil,
'Wherefore glowest thou longer than the firebrand?'
'I was born in the dark mine, and the brand in the pleasant greenwood.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

I asked the green oak of the assembly, wherefore its boughs were dry and seared like the horns of the stag,
And it showed me that a small worm had gnawed its roots.
The boy who remembered the scourge, undid the wicket of the castle at midnight.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

Lightning destroyeth temples, though their spires pierce the clouds;
Storms destroy armadas, though their sails intercept the gale.
He that is in his glory falleth, and that by a contemptible enemy.
Kindness fadeth away, but vengeance endureth.

More of the same wild images were thrown out, each bearing some analogy, however fanciful and remote, to the theme which occurred like a chorus at the close of each stanza; so that the poetry resembled a piece of music, which, after repeated excursions through fanciful variations, returns ever and anon to the simple melody which is the subject of ornament.

As the minstrel sung, his eyes were fixed on the bridge and its vicinity; but when, near the close of his chant, he raised up his eyes towards the distant towers of the Garde Doloureuse, he saw that the gates were opened, and that there was a mustering of guards and attendants without the barriers, as if some expedition were about to set forth, or some person of importance to appear on the scene. At the same time, glancing his eyes around, he discovered that the landscape, so solitary when he first took his seat on the grey stone from which he overlooked it, was now becoming filled with figures.

During his reverie, several persons, solitary and in groups, men, women, and children, had begun to assemble themselves on both sides of the river, and were loitering there, as if expecting some spectacle. There was also much bustling at the Flemings' mills, which, though at some distance, were also completely under his eye. A procession seemed to be arranging itself there, which soon began to move forward, with pipe and tabor, and various other instruments of music, and soon approached, in regular order, the place where Vidal was seated.

It appeared the business in hand was of a pacific character; for the grey-bearded old men of the little settlement, in their decent russet gowns, came first after the rustic band of music, walking in ranks of three and three, supported by their staves, and regulating the motion of the whole procession by their sober and staid pace. After these fathers of the settlement came Wilkin Flammock, mounted on his mighty war-horse, and in complete armour, save his head, like a vassal prepared

to do military service for his lord. After him followed, and in battle rank, the flower of the little colony, consisting of thirty men well armed and appointed, whose steady march, as well as their clean and glittering armour, showed steadiness and discipline, although they lacked alike the fiery glance of the French soldiery, or the look of dogged defiance which characterised the English, or the wild ecstatic impetuosity of eye which then distinguished the Welsh. The mothers and the maidens of the colony came next; then followed the children, with faces as chubby, and features as serious, and steps as grave, as their parents; and last, as a rearguard, came the youths from fourteen to twenty, armed with light lances, bows, and similar weapons becoming their age.

This procession wheeled around the base of the mound or embankment on which the minstrel was seated, crossed the bridge with the same slow and regular pace, and formed themselves into a double line, facing inwards, as if to receive some person of consequence, or witness some ceremonial. Flammock remained at the extremity of the avenue thus formed by his countrymen, and quietly, yet earnestly, engaged in making arrangements and preparations.

In the meanwhile, stragglers of different countries began to draw together, apparently brought there by mere curiosity, and formed a motley assemblage at the farther end of the bridge, which was that nearest to the castle. Two English peasants passed very near the stone on which Vidal sat. 'Wilt thou sing us a song, minstrel,' said one of them, 'and here is a tester for thee?' throwing into his hat a small silver coin.

'I am under a vow,' answered the minstrel, 'and may not practise the gay science at present.'

'Or you are too proud to play to English churls,' said the elder peasant, 'for thy tongue smacks of the Norman.'

'Keep the coin, nevertheless,' said the younger man. 'Let the palmer have what the minstrel refuses to earn.'

'I pray you reserve your bounty, kind friend,' said Vidal, 'I need it not; and tell me of your kindness, instead, what matters are going forward here.'

'Why, know you not that we have got our Constable De Lacy again, and that he is to grant solemn investiture to the Flemish weavers of all these fine things Harry of Anjou has given? Had Edward the Confessor been alive, to give the Netherland knaves their guerdon, it would have been a cast of the gallows-tree. But come, neighbour, we shall lose the show.'

So saying, they pressed down the hill.

Vidal fixed his eyes on the gates of the distant castle; and the remote waving of banners, and mustering of men on horseback, though imperfectly seen at such a distance, apprised him that one of note was about to set forth at the head of a considerable train of military attendants. Distant flourishes of trumpets, which came faintly yet distinctly on his ear, seemed to attest the same. Presently he perceived, by the dust which began to arise in columns betwixt the castle and the bridge, as well as by the nearer sound of the clarions, that the troop was advancing towards him in procession.

Vidal, on his own part, seemed as if irresolute whether to retain his present position, where he commanded a full but remote view of the whole scene, or to obtain a nearer but more partial one by involving himself in the crowd which now closed around on either hand of the bridge, unless where the avenue was kept open by the armed and arrayed Flemings.

A monk next hurried past Vidal, and on his inquiring as formerly the cause of the assembly, answered, in a muttering tone, from beneath his hood, that it was the Constable De Lacy, who, as the first act of his authority, was then and there to deliver to the Flemings a royal charter of their immunities.

'He is in haste to exercise his authority, methinks,' said the minstrel.

'He that has just gotten a sword is impatient to draw it,' replied the monk, who added more which the minstrel understood imperfectly; for Father Aldrovand had not recovered the injury which he had received during the siege.

Vidal, however, understood him to say, that he was to meet the Constable there, to beg his favourable intercession.

'I also will meet him,' said Renault Vidal, rising suddenly from the stone which he occupied.

'Follow me then,' mumbled the priest; 'the Flemings know me, and will let me forward.'

But Father Aldrovand being in disgrace, his influence was not so potent as he had flattered himself; and both he and the minstrel were jostled to and fro in the crowd, and separated from each other.

Vidal, however, was recognised by the English peasants who had before spoke to him. 'Canst thou do any jugglers' feats, minstrel?' said one. 'Thou mayst earn a fair largesse, for our Norman masters love *jonglerie*.'

'I know but one,' said Vidal, 'and I will show it, if you will yield me some room.'

They crowded a little off from him, and gave him time to throw aside his bonnet, bare his legs and knees, by stripping off the leathern buskins which swathed them, and retaining only his sandals. He then tied a party-coloured handkerchief around his swarthy and sunburnt hair, and, casting off his upper doublet, showed his brawny and nervous arms, naked to the shoulder.

But while he amused those immediately about him with these preparations, a commotion and rush among the crowd, together with the close sound of trumpets, answered by all the Flemish instruments of music, as well as the shouts in Norman and English of 'Long live the gallant Constable! Our Lady for the bold De Lacy!' announced that the Constable was close at hand.

Vidal made incredible exertions to approach the leader of the procession, whose morion, distinguished by its lofty plumes, and right hand holding his truncheon or leading-staff, was all he could see, on account of the crowd of officers and armed men around him. At length his exertions prevailed, and he came within three yards of the Constable, who was then in a small circle which had been with difficulty kept clear for the purpose of the ceremonial of the day. His back was towards the minstrel, and he was in the act of bending from his horse to deliver the royal charter to Wilkin Flammock, who had knelt on one knee to receive it the more reverentially. His discharge of this duty occasioned the Constable to stoop so low that his plume seemed in the act of mixing with the flowing mane of his noble charger.

At this moment, Vidal threw himself with singular agility over the heads of the Flemings who guarded the circle; and, ere an eye could twinkle, his right knee was on the croupe of the Constable's horse, the grasp of his left hand on the collar of De Lacy's buff-coat; then, clinging to his prey like a tiger after its leap, he drew, in the same instant of time, a short, sharp dagger, and buried it in the back of the neck, just where the spine, which was severed by the stroke, serves to convey to the trunk of the human body the mysterious influences of the brain. The blow was struck with the utmost accuracy of aim and strength of arm. The unhappy horseman dropped from his saddle without groan or struggle, like a bull in the amphitheatre, under the steel of the tauridor; and in the same saddle

sat his murderer, brandishing the bloody poniard, and urging the horse to speed.

There was indeed a possibility of his having achieved his escape, so much were those around paralysed for the moment by the suddenness and audacity of the enterprise; but Flammock's presence of mind did not forsake him: he seized the horse by the bridle, and, aided by those who wanted but an example, made the rider prisoner, bound his arms, and called aloud that he must be carried before King Henry. This proposal, uttered in Flammock's strong and decided tone of voice, silenced a thousand wild cries of murder and treason, which had arisen while the different and hostile natives, of which the crowd was composed, threw upon each other reciprocally the charge of treachery.

All the streams, however, now assembled in one channel, and poured with unanimous assent towards the Garde Doloureuse, excepting a few of the murdered nobleman's train, who remained to transport their master's body, in decent solemnity of mourning, from the spot which he had sought with so much pomp and triumph.

When Flammock reached the Garde Doloureuse, he was readily admitted with his prisoner, and with such witnesses as he had selected to prove the execution of the crime. To his request of an audience, he was answered that the King had commanded that none should be admitted to him for some time; yet so singular were the tidings of the Constable's slaughter, that the captain of the guard ventured to interrupt Henry's privacy, in order to communicate that event, and returned with orders that Flammock and his prisoner should be instantly admitted to the royal apartment. Here they found Henry, attended by several persons, who stood respectfully behind the royal seat in a darkened part of the room.

When Flammock entered, his large bulk and massive limbs were strangely contrasted with cheeks pale with horror at what he had just witnessed, and with awe at finding himself in the royal presence-chamber. Beside him stood his prisoner, undaunted by the situation in which he was placed. The blood of his victim, which had spirted from the wound, was visible on his bare limbs and his scanty garments; but particularly upon his brow and the handkerchief with which it was bound.

Henry gazed on him with a stern look, which the other not only endured without dismay, but seemed to return with a frown of defiance.

'Does no one know this caitiff?' said Henry, looking around him.

There was no immediate answer, until Philip Guarine, stepping from the group which stood behind the royal chair, said, though with hesitation, 'So please you, my liege, but for the strange guise in which he is now arrayed, I should say there was a household minstrel of my master, by name Renault Vidal.'

'Thou art deceived, Norman,' replied the minstrel: 'my menial place and base lineage were but assumed. I am Cadwallon the Briton — Cadwallon of the Nine Lays — Cadwallon, the chief bard of Gwenwyn of Powys Land — and his avenger!'

As he uttered the last word, his looks encountered those of a palmer, who had gradually advanced from the recess in which the attendants were stationed, and now confronted him.

The Welshman's eyes looked so eagerly ghastly as if flying from their sockets, while he exclaimed, in a tone of surprise, mingled with horror, 'Do the dead come before monarchs? Or, if thou art alive, *whom* have I slain? I dreamed not, surely, of that bound, and of that home blow, yet my victim stands before me! Have I not slain the Constable of Chester?'

'Thou hast indeed slain the Constable,' answered the King; 'but know, Welshman, it was Randal de Lacy, on whom that charge was this morning conferred, by our belief of our loyal and faithful Hugo de Lacy's having been lost upon his return from the Holy Land, as the vessel in which he had taken passage was report[illegible] have suffered shipwreck. Thou hast cut short Randal[illegible]levation but by a few hours; for to-morrow's sun wo[illegible]e again seen him without land or lordship.'

The prisoner dropped his head on his bosom in evident despair. 'I thought,' he murmured, 'that he had changed his slough and come forth so glorious all too soon. May the eyes drop out that were cheated with those baubles, a plumed cap and a lacquered baton!'

'I will take care, Welshman, thine eyes cheat thee not again,' said the King, sternly; 'before the night is an hour older, they shall be [illegible]sed on all that is earthly.'

'May I request of [illegible]ur nobleness,' said the Constable, 'that you will permit me to ask the unhappy man a few questions?'

'When I have de[illegible]anded of him myself,' said the King, 'why he has dipt his h[illegible]ds in the blood of a noble Norman.'

'Because he at whom I aimed my blow,' said the Briton, his

eye glancing fiercely from the King to De Lacy, and back, 'had spilled the blood of the descendant of a thousand kings; to which his own gore, or thine, proud Count of Anjou, is but as the puddle of the highway to the silver fountain.'

Henry's eye menaced the audacious speaker; but the King reined in his wrath when he beheld the imploring look of his servant. 'What wouldst thou ask of him?' he said; 'be brief, for his time is short.'

'So please you, my liege, I would but demand wherefore he has for years forborne to take the life he aimed at, when it was in his power — nay, when it must have been lost but for his seemingly faithful service?'

'Norman,' said Cadwallon, 'I will answer thee. When I first took upon me thy service, it was well my purpose to [illegible]e slain thee that night. There stands the man,' pointing to Philip Guarine, 'to whose vigilance thou owed'st thy safety.'

'Indeed,' said De Lacy, 'I do remember some indications of such a purpose; but why didst thou forego it, when following opportunities put it in thy power?'

'When the slayer of my sovereign became God's soldier,' answered Cadwallon, 'and served his cause in Palestine, he was safe from my earthly vengeance.'

'A wonderful forbearance on the part of a Welsh assassin!' said the King, scornfully.

'Ay,' answered Cadwallon; 'and which certain Christian princes have scarce attained to, who have never neglected the chance of pillage or conquest afforded by the absence of a rival in the Holy Crusade.'

'Now, by the Holy Rood ——' said Henry, on the point of bursting out, for the insult affected him peculiarly, but, suddenly stopping, he said, with an air of contempt, 'To the gallows with the knave!'

'But one other question,' said De Lacy, 'Renault, or by whatever name thou art called. Ever since my return thou hast rendered me service inconsistent with thy stern resolution upon my life: thou didst aid me in my shipwreck, and didst guide me safely through Wales, where my name would have ensured my death; and all this after the crusade was accomplished?'

'I could explain thy doubt,' said the bard, 'but that it might be thought I was pleading for my life.'

'Hesitate not for that,' said the King; 'for, were our Holy Father to intercede for thee, his prayer were in vain.'

'Well, then,' said the bard, 'know the truth: I was too proud to permit either wave or Welshman to share in my revenge. Know also — what is perhaps Cadwallon's weakness — use and habit had divided my feelings towards De Lacy between aversion and admiration. I still contemplated my revenge, but as something which I might never complete, and which seemed rather an image in the clouds than an object to which I must one day draw near. And when I beheld thee,' he said, turning to De Lacy, 'this very day so determined, so sternly resolved, to bear thy impending fate like a man — that you seemed to me to resemble the last tower of a ruined palace, still holding its head to heaven, when its walls of splendour, and its bowers of delight, lay in desolation around — "May I perish," I said to myself in secret, "ere I perfect its ruin!" Yes, De Lacy, then — even then, but some hours since, hadst thou accepted my proffered hand, I had served thee as never follower served master. You rejected it with scorn; and yet, notwithstanding that insult, it required that I should have seen you, as I thought, trampling over the field in which you slew my master, in the full pride of Norman insolence, to animate my resolution to strike the blow which, meant for you, has slain at least one of your usurping race. I will answer no more questions. Lead on to axe or gallows — it is indifferent to Cadwallon: my soul will soon be with my free and noble ancestry, and with my beloved and royal patron.'

'My liege and prince,' said De Lacy, bending his knee to Henry, 'can you hear this, and refuse your ancient servant one request? Spare this man. Extinguish not such a light, because it is devious and wild.'

'Rise — rise, De Lacy, and shame thee of thy petition,' said the King. 'Thy kinsman's blood — the blood of a noble Norman — is on the Welshman's hands and brow. As I am crowned king, he shall die ere it is wiped off. Here! have him to present execution!'

Cadwallon was instantly withdrawn under a guard. The Constable seemed, by action rather than words, to continue his intercession.

'Thou art mad, De Lacy — thou art mad, mine old and true friend, to urge me thus,' said the King, compelling De Lacy to rise. 'Seest thou not that my care in this matter is for thee? This Randal, by largesses and promises, hath made many friends, who will not, perhaps, easily again be brought to your allegiance, returning, as thou dost, diminished in power and wealth. Had he lived, we might have had hard work to deprive him

entirely of the power which he had acquired. We thank the Welsh assassin who hath rid us of him; but his adherents would cry foul play were the murderer spared. When blood is paid for blood, all will be forgotten, and their loyalty will once more flow in its proper channel to thee, their lawful lord.'

Hugo de Lacy arose from his knees, and endeavoured respectfully to combat the politic reasons of his wily sovereign, which he plainly saw were resorted to less for his sake than with the prudent purpose of effecting the change of feudal authority with the least possible trouble to the country or sovereign.

Henry listened to De Lacy's arguments patiently, and combated them with temper, until the death-drum began to beat and the castle bell to toll. He then led De Lacy to the window, on which, for it was now dark, a strong ruddy light began to gleam from without. A body of men-at-arms, each holding in his hand a blazing torch, were returning along the terrace from the execution of the wild but high-souled Briton, with cries of 'Long live King Henry! and so perish all enemies of the gentle Norman men!'

CONCLUSION

A sun hath set — a star hath risen,
O, Geraldine! since arms of thine
Have been the lovely lady's prison.

COLERIDGE.

POPULAR fame had erred in assigning to Eveline Berenger, after the capture of her castle, any confinement more severe than that of her aunt the lady abbess of the Cistercians' convent afforded. Yet that was severe enough; for maiden aunts, whether abbesses or no, are not tolerant of the species of errors of which Eveline was accused; and the innocent damosel was brought in many ways to eat her bread in shame of countenance and bitterness of heart. Every day of her confinement was rendered less and less endurable by taunts, in the various forms of sympathy, consolation, and exhortation; but which, stript of their assumed forms, were undisguised anger and insult. The company of Rose was all which Eveline had to sustain her under these inflictions, and that was at length withdrawn on the very morning when so many important events took place at the Garde Doloureuse.

The unfortunate young lady inquired in vain of a grim-faced nun, who appeared in Rose's place to assist her to dress, why her companion and friend was debarred attendance. The nun observed on that score an obstinate silence, but threw out many hints on the importance attached to the vain ornaments of a frail child of clay, and on the hardship that even a spouse of Heaven was compelled to divert her thoughts from her higher duties, and condescend to fasten clasps and adjust veils.

The lady abbess, however, told her niece after matins, that her attendant had not been withdrawn from her for a space only, but was likely to be shut up in a house of the severest profession, for having afforded her mistress assistance in receiving Damian de Lacy into her sleeping-apartment at the castle of Baldringham.

A soldier of De Lacy's band, who had hitherto kept what he had observed a secret, being off his post that night, had now in

Damian's disgrace found he might benefit himself by telling the story. This new blow, so unexpected, so afflictive — this new charge, which it was so difficult to explain, and so impossible utterly to deny, seemed to Eveline to seal Damian's fate and her own; while the thought that she had involved in ruin her single-hearted and high-souled attendant was all that had been wanting to produce a state which approached to the apathy of despair. 'Think of me what you will,' she said to her aunt, 'I will no longer defend myself; say what you will, I will no longer reply; carry me where you will, I will no longer resist. God will, in His good time, clear my fame — may He forgive my persecutors!'

After this, and during several hours of that unhappy day, the Lady Eveline, pale, cold, silent, glided from chapel to refectory, from refectory to chapel again, at the slightest beck of the abbess or her official sisters, and seemed to regard the various privations, penances, admonitions, and reproaches, of which she, in the course of that day, was subjected to an extraordinary share, no more than a marble statue minds the inclemency of the external air, or the rain-drops which fall upon it, though they must in time waste and consume it.

The abbess, who loved her niece, although her affection showed itself often in a vexatious manner, became at length alarmed, countermanded her orders for removing Eveline to an inferior cell, attended herself to see her laid in bed (in which, as in everything else, the young lady seemed entirely passive), and, with something like reviving tenderness, kissed and blessed her on leaving the apartment. Slight as the mark of kindness was, it was unexpected, and, like the rod of Moses, opened the hidden fountains of waters. Eveline wept, a resource which had been that day denied to her; she prayed; and, finally, sobbed herself to sleep, like an infant, with a mind somewhat tranquillised by having given way to this tide of natural emotion.

She awoke more than once in the night to recall mingled and gloomy dreams of cells and of castles, of funerals and of bridals, of coronets and of racks and gibbets; but towards morning she fell into sleep more sound than she had hitherto enjoyed, and her visions partook of its soothing character. The Lady of the Garde Doloureuse seemed to smile on her amid her dreams, and to promise her votaress protection. The shade of her father was there also; and, with the boldness of a dreamer, she saw the paternal resemblance with awe, but without fear. His lips moved, and she heard words; their import she did not fully comprehend, save that they spoke of hope, consolation, and approaching

happiness. There also glided in, with bright blue eyes fixed upon hers, dressed in a tunic of saffron-coloured silk, with a mantle of cerulean blue of antique fashion, the form of a female, resplendent in that delicate species of beauty which attends the fairest complexion. It was, she thought, the Britoness Vanda; but her countenance was no longer resentful; her long yellow hair flew not loose on her shoulders, but was mysteriously braided with oak and mistletoe; above all, her right hand was gracefully disposed of under her mantle, and it was an unmutilated, unspotted, and beautifully formed hand which crossed the bro ? of Eveline. Yet, under these assurances of favour, a thrill of fear passed over her as the vision seemed to repeat or chant,

'Widow'd wife and wedded maid,
Betrothed, betrayer, and betray'd,
All is done that has been said!
Vanda's wrong has been ywroken; *
Take her pardon by this token.'

She bent down, as if to kiss Eveline, who started at that instant, and then awoke. Her hand was indeed gently pressed by one as pure and white as her own. The blue eyes and fair hair of a lovely female face, with half-veiled bosom and dishevelled locks, flitted through her vision, and indeed its lips approached to those of the lovely sleeper at the moment of her awakening; but it was Rose in whose arms her mistress found herself pressed, and who moistened her face with tears, as in a passion of affection she covered it with kisses.

'What means this, Rose?' said Eveline; 'thank God, you are restored to me! But what mean these bursts of weeping?'

'Let me weep — let me weep,' said Rose; 'it is long since I have wept for joy, and long, I trust, it will be ere I again weep for sorrow. News are come on the spur from the Garde Dolourcuse. Amelot has brought them; he is at liberty, so is his master, and in high favour with Henry. Hear yet more, but let me not tell it too hastily. You grow pale.'

'No — no,' said Eveline; 'go on — go on, I think I understand you — I think I do.'

'The villain Randal de Lacy, the master-mover of all our sorrows, will plague you no more: he was slain by an honest Welshman, and g..eved am I that they have hanged the poor man for his good service. Above all, the stout old Constable is himself returned from Palestine, as worthy, and somewhat

wiser, than he was; for it is thought he will renounce his contract with your ladyship.'

'Silly girl,' said Eveline, crimsoning as high as she had been before pale, 'jest not amidst such a tale. But can this be reality? Is Randal indeed slain, and the Constable returned?'

These were hasty and hurried questions, answered as hastily and confusedly, and broken with ejaculations of surprise, and thanks to Heaven and to Our Lady, until the ecstasy of delight sobered down into a sort of tranquil wonder.

Meanwhile Damian Lacy also had his explanations to receive, and the mode in which they were conveyed had something remarkable. Damian had for some time been the inhabitant of what our age would have termed a dungeon, but which, in the ancient days, they called a prison. We are perhaps censurable in making the dwelling and the food of acknowledged and convicted guilt more comfortable and palatable than what the parties could have gained by any exertions when at large, and supporting themselves by honest labour; but this is a venial error compared to that of our ancestors, who, considering a charge and a conviction as synonymous, treated the accused before sentence in a manner which would have been of itself a severe punishment after he was found guilty. Damian, therefore, notwithstanding his high birth and distinguished rank, was confined after the manner of the most atrocious criminal, was heavily fettered, fed on the coarsest food, and experienced only this alleviation, that he was permitted to indulge his misery in a solitary and separate cell, the wretched furniture of which was a mean bedstead, and a broken table and chair. A coffin — and his own arms and initials were painted upon it — stood in one corner, to remind him of his approaching fate; and a crucifix was placed in another, to intimate to him that there was a world beyond that which must soon close upon him. No noise could penetrate into the iron silence of his prison — no rumour, either touching his own fate or that of his friends. Charged with being taken in open arms against the King, he was subject to military law, and to be put to death even without the formality of a hearing; and he foresaw no milder conclusion to his imprisonment.

This melancholy dwelling had been the abode of Damian for nearly a month, when, strange as it may seem, his health, which had suffered much from his wounds, began gradually to improve, either benefited by the abstemious diet to which he was reduced,

or that certainty, however melancholy, is an evil better endured by many constitutions than the feverish contrast betwixt passion and duty. But the term of his imprisonment seemed drawing speedily to a close: his jailer, a sullen Saxon of the lowest order, in more words than he had yet used to him, warned him to look to a speedy change of dwelling, and the tone in which he spoke convinced the prisoner there was no time to be lost. He demanded a confessor, and the jailer, though he withdrew without reply, seemed to intimate by his manner that the boon would be granted.

Next morning, at an unusually early hour, the chains and bolts of the cell were heard to clash and groan, and Damian was startled from a broken sleep, which he had not enjoyed for above two hours. His eyes were bent on the slowly-opening door, as if he had expected the headsman and his assistants; but the jailer ushered in a stout man in a pilgrim's habit.

'Is it a priest whom you bring me, warden?' said the unhappy prisoner.

'He can best answer the question himself,' said the surly official, and presently withdrew.

The pilgrim remained standing on the floor, with his back to the small window, or rather loophole, by which the cell was imperfectly lighted, and gazed intently upon Damian, who was seated on the side of his bed, his pale cheek and dishevelled hair bearing a melancholy correspondence to his heavy irons. He returned the pilgrim's gaze, but the imperfect light only showed him that his visitor was a stout old man, who wore the scallop-shell on his bonnet, as a token that he had passed the sea, and carried a palm-branch in his hand, to show he had visited the Holy Land.

'*Benedicite*, reverend father,' said the unhappy young man. 'Are you a priest come to unburden my conscience?'

'I am not a priest,' replied the palmer, 'but one who brings you news of discomfort.'

'You bring them to one to whom comfort has been long a stranger, and to a place which perchance never knew it,' replied Damian.

'I may be the bolder in my communication,' said the palmer: 'those in sorrow will better hear ill news than those whom they surprise in the possession of content and happiness.'

'Yet even the situation of the wretched,' said Damian, 'can be rendered more wretched by su pense. I pray you, reverend sir, to speak the worst at once. If you come to announce the

doom of this poor frame, may God be gracious to the spirit which must be violently dismissed from it!'

'I have no such charge,' said the palmer. 'I come from the Holy Land, and have the more grief in finding you thus, because my message to you was one addressed to a free man, and a wealthy one.'

'For my freedom,' said Damian, 'let these fetters speak, and this apartment for my wealth. But speak out thy news; should my uncle, for I fear thy tale regards him, want either my arm or my fortune, this dungeon and my degradation have further pangs than I had yet supposed, as they render me unable to aid him.'

'Your uncle, young man,' said the palmer, 'is prisoner — I should rather say slave — to the great Soldan, taken in a battle in which he did his duty, though unable to avert the defeat of the Christians, with which it was concluded. He was made prisoner while covering the retreat, but not until he had slain with his own hand, for his misfortune as it has proved, Hasson Ali, a favourite of the Soldan. The cruel pagan has caused the worthy knight to be loaded with irons heavier than those you wear, and the dungeon to which he is confined would make this seem a palace. The infidel's first resolution was to put the valiant Constable to the most dreadful death which his tormentors could devise. But fame told him that Hugo de Lacy was a man of great power and wealth, and he has demanded a ransom of ten thousand bezants of gold. Your uncle replied that "The payment would totally impoverish him, and oblige him to dispose of his whole estates; even then," he pleaded, "time must be allowed him to convert them into money." The Soldan replied, that "It imported little to him whether a hound like the Constable were fat or lean, and that he therefore insisted upon the full amount of the ransom." But he so far relaxed as to make it payable in three portions, on condition that, along with the first portion of the price, the nearest of kin and heir of De Lacy must be placed in his hands as a hostage for what remained due. On these conditions he consented your uncle should be put at liberty so soon as you arrive in Palestine with the gold.'

'Now may I indeed call myself unhappy,' said Damian, 'that I cannot show my love and duty to my noble uncle, who hath ever been a father to me in my orphan state.'

'It will be a heavy disappointment, doubtless, to the Constable,' said the palmer, 'because he was eager to return to

this happy country to fulfil a contract of marriage which he had formed with a lady of great beauty and fortune.'

Damian shrunk together in such sort that his fetters clashed, but he made no answer.

'Were he not your uncle,' continued the pilgrim, 'and well known as a wise man, I should think he is not quite prudent in this matter. Whatever he was before he left England, two summers spent in the wars of Palestine, and another amid the tortures and restraints of a heathen prison, have made him a sorry bridegroom.'

'Peace, pilgrim,' said De Lacy, with a commanding tone. 'It is not thy part to censure such a noble knight as my uncle, nor is it meet that I should listen to your strictures.'

'I crave your pardon, young man,' said the palmer. 'I spoke not without some view to your interest, which, methinks, does not so well consort with thine uncle having an heir of his body.'

'Peace, base man!' said Damian. 'By Heaven, I think worse of my cell than I did before, since its doors opened to such a counsellor, and of my chains, since they restrain me from chastising him. Depart, I pray thee.'

'Not till I have your answer for your uncle,' answered the palmer. 'My age scorns the anger of thy youth, as the rock despises the foam of the rivulet dashed against it.'

'Then, say to my uncle,' answered Damian, 'I am a prisoner, or I would have come to him; I am a confiscated beggar, or I would have sent him my all.'

'Such virtuous purposes are easily and boldly announced,' said the palmer, 'when he who speaks them knows that he cannot be called upon to make good the boast of his tongue. But could I tell thee of thy restoration to freedom and wealth, I trow thou wouldst consider twice ere thy act confirmed the sacrifice thou hast in thy present state promised so glibly.'

'Leave me, I prithee, old man,' said Damian; 'thy thought cannot comprehend the tenor of mine — go, and add not to my distress insults which I have not the means to avenge.'

'But what if I had it in my power to place thee in the situation of a free and wealthy man, would it please thee *then* to be reminded of thy present boast; for if not, thou mayst rely on my discretion never to mention the difference of sentiment between Damian bound and Damian at liberty?'

'How meanest thou? or hast thou any meaning, save to torment me?' said the youth.

'Not so,' replied the old palmer, plucking from his bosom a

parchment scroll to which a heavy seal was attached. 'Know that thy cousin Randal hath been strangely slain, and his treacheries towards the Constable and thee as strangely discovered. The King, in requital of thy sufferings, hath sent thee this full pardon, and endowed thee with a third part of those ample estates, which, by his death, revert to the crown.'

'And hath the King also restored my freedom and my right of blood?' exclaimed Damian.

'From this moment, forthwith,' said the palmer; 'look upon the parchment — behold the royal hand and seal.'

'I must have better proof. Here,' he exclaimed, loudly clashing his irons at the same time — 'here, thou Dogget — warder — son of a Saxon wolf-hound!'

The palmer, striking on the door, seconded the previous exertions for summoning the jailer, who entered accordingly.

'Warder,' said Damian de Lacy, in a stern tone, 'am I yet thy prisoner or no?'

The sullen jailer consulted the palmer by a look, and then answered to Damian that he was a free man.

'Then, death of thy heart, slave,' said Damian, impatiently, 'why hang these fetters on the free limbs of a Norman noble? Each moment they confine him are worth a lifetime of bondage to such a serf as thou!'

'They are soon rid of, Sir Damian,' said the man; 'and I pray you to take some patience, when you remember that ten minutes since you had little right to think these bracelets would have been removed for any other purpose than your progress to the scaffold.'

'Peace, ban-dog,' said Damian, 'and be speedy! And thou, who hast brought me these good tidings, I forgive thy former bearing: thou thoughtest, doubtless, that it was prudent to extort from me professions during my bondage which might in honour decide my conduct when at large. The suspicion inferred in it somewhat offensive, but thy motive was to ensure my uncle's liberty.'

'And is it really your purpose,' said the palmer, 'to employ your newly-gained freedom in a voyage to Syria, and to exchange your English prison for the dungeon of the Soldan?'

'If thou thyself wilt act as my guide,' answered the undaunted youth, 'you shall not say I dally by the way.'

'And the ransom,' said the palmer, 'how is that to be provided?'

'How, but from the estates, which, nominally restored to

me, remain in truth and justice my uncle's, and must be applied to his use in the first instance? If I mistake not greatly, there is not a Jew or Lombard who would not advance the necessary sums on such security. Therefore, dog,' he continued, addressing the jailer, 'hasten thy unclenching and undoing of rivets, and be not dainty of giving me a little pain, so thou break no limb, for I cannot afford to be stayed on my journey.'

The palmer looked on a little while, as if surprised at Damian's determination, then exclaimed, 'I can keep the old man's secret no longer; such high-souled generosity must not be sacrificed. Hark thee, brave Sir Damian, I have a mighty secret still to impart, and as this Saxon churl understands no French, this is no unfit opportunity to communicate it. Know that thine uncle is a changed man in mind, as he is debilitated and broken down in body. Peevishness and jealousy have possessed themselves of a heart which was once strong and generous; his life is now on the dregs, and, I grieve to speak it, these dregs are foul and bitter.'

'Is this thy mighty secret?' said Damian. 'That men grow old, I know; and if with infirmity of body comes infirmity of temper and mind, their case the more strongly claims the dutiful observance of those who are bound to them in blood or affection.'

'Ay,' replied the pilgrim, 'but the Constable's mind has been poisoned against thee by rumours which have reached his ear from England, that there have been thoughts of affection betwixt thee and his betrothed bride, Eveline Berenger. Ha! have I touched you now?'

'Not a whit,' said Damian, putting on the strongest resolution with which his virtue could supply him; 'it was but this fellow who struck my shin-bone somewhat sharply with his hammer. Proceed. My uncle heard such a report, and believed it?'

'He did,' said the palmer; 'I can well aver it, since he concealed no thought from me. But he prayed me carefully to hide his suspicions from you. "Otherwise," said he, "the young wolf-cub will never thrust himself into the trap for the deliverance of the old he-wolf. Were he once in my prison-house," your uncle continued to speak of you, "he should rot and die ere I sent one penny of ransom to set at liberty the lover of my betrothed bride."'

'Could this be my uncle's sincere purpose?' said Damian, all aghast. 'Could he plan so much treachery towards me as to

leave me in the captivity into which I threw myself for his redemption? Tush! it cannot be.'

'Flatter not yourself with such a vain opinion,' said the palmer: 'if you go to Syria, you go to eternal captivity, while your uncle returns to possession of wealth little diminished — and of Eveline Berenger.'

'Ha!' ejaculated Damian; and, looking down for an instant, demanded of the palmer, in a subdued voice, what he would have him to do in such an extremity.

'The case is plain, according to my poor judgment,' replied the palmer. 'No one is bound to faith with those who mean to observe none with him. Anticipate this treachery of your uncle, and let his now short and infirm existence moulder out in the pestiferous cell to which he would condemn your youthful strength. The royal grant has assigned you lands enough for your honourable support; and wherefore not unite with them those of the Garde Doloureuse? Eveline Berenger, if I do not greatly mistake, will scarcely say "nay." Ay, more — I vouch it on my soul that she will say "yes," for I have sure information of her mind; and for her pre-contract, a word from Henry to His Holiness, now that they are in the heyday of their reconciliation, will obliterate the name "Hugo" from the parchment, and insert "Damian" in its stead.'

'Now, by my faith,' said Damian, arising and placing his foot upon the stool, that the warder might more easily strike off the last ring by which he was encumbered, 'I have heard of such things as this — I have heard of beings who, with seeming gravity of word and aspect, with subtle counsels, artfully applied to the frailties of human nature, have haunted the cells of despairing men, and made them many a fair promise, if they would but exchange for their bye-ways the paths of salvation. Such are the fiend's dearest agents, and in such a guise hath the fiend himself been known to appear. In the name of God, old man, if human thou art, begone! I like not thy words or thy presence — I spit at thy counsels. And mark me,' he added, with a menacing gesture, 'look to thine own safety; I shall presently be at liberty!'

'Boy,' replied the palmer, folding his arms contemptuously in his cloak, 'I scorn thy menaces; I leave thee not till we know each other better.'

'I too,' said Damian, 'would fain know whether thou be'st man or fiend; and now for the trial.' As he spoke, the last shackle fell from his leg and clashed on the pavement, and at

the same moment he sprung on the palmer, caught him by the waist, and exclaimed, as he made three distinct and desperate attempts to lift him up and dash him headlong to the earth, 'This for maligning a nobleman, this for doubting the honour of a knight, and this (with a yet more violent exertion) for belying a lady!'

Each effort of Damian seemed equal to have rooted up a tree; yet, though they staggered the old man, they overthrew him not; and while Damian panted with his last exertion, he replied, 'And take thou this, for so roughly entreating thy father's brother.'

As he spoke, Damian de Lacy, the best youthful wrestler in Cheshire, received no soft fall on the floor of the dungeon. He arose slowly and astounded; but the palmer had now thrown back both hood and dalmatique, and the features, though bearing marks of age and climate, were those of his uncle the Constable, who calmly observed, 'I think, Damian, thou art become stronger, or I weaker, since my breast was last pressed against yours in our country's celebrated sport. Thou hadst nigh had me down in that last turn, but that I knew the old De Lacy's back-trip as well as thou. But wherefore kneel, man?' He raised him with much kindness, kissed his cheek, and proceeded — 'Think not, my dearest nephew, that I meant in my late disguise to try your faith, which I myself never doubted. But evil tongues had been busy, and it was this which made me resolve on an experiment, the result of which has been, as I expected, most honourable for you. And know — for these walls have sometimes ears, even according to the letter — there are ears and eyes not far distant which have heard and seen the whole. Marry, I wish, though, thy last hug had not been so severe a one. My ribs still feel the impression of thy knuckles.'

'Dearest and honoured uncle,' said Damian, 'excuse ——'

'There is nothing to excuse,' replied his uncle, interrupting him. 'Have we not wrestled a turn before now? But there remains yet one trial for thee to go through. Get thee out of this hole speedily; don thy best array to accompany me to the church at noon; for, Damian, thou must be present at the marriage of the Lady Eveline Berenger.'

This proposal at once struck to the earth the unhappy young man. 'For mercy's sake,' he exclaimed, 'hold me excused in this, my gracious uncle! I have been of late severely wounded, and am very weak.'

'As my bones can testify,' said his uncle. 'Why, man, thou hast the strength of a Norway bear.'

'Passion,' answered Damian, 'might give me strength for a moment; but, dearest uncle, ask anything of me rather than this. Methinks, if I have been faulty, some other punishment might suffice.'

'I tell thee,' said the Constable, 'thy presence is necessary — indispensably necessary. Strange reports have been abroad, which thy absence on this occasion would go far to confirm. Eveline's character and mine own are concerned in this.'

'If so,' said Damian — 'if it be indeed so, no task will be too hard for me. But I trust, when the ceremony is over, you will not refuse me your consent to take the cross, unless you should prefer my joining the troops destined, as I heard, for the conquest of Ireland.'

'Ay — ay,' said the Constable; 'if Eveline grant you permission, I will not withhold mine.'

'Uncle,' said Damian, somewhat sternly, 'you do not know the feelings which you jest with.'

'Nay,' said the Constable, 'I compel nothing; for, if thou goest to the church and likest not the match, thou may'st put a stop to it if thou wilt: the sacrament cannot proceed without the bridegroom's consent.'

'I understand you not, uncle,' said Damian; 'you have already consented.'

'Yes, Damian,' he said, 'I have — to withdraw my claim, and to relinquish it in thy favour; for if Eveline Berenger is wedded to-day, thou art her bridegroom. The church has given her sanction, the King his approbation, the lady says not "nay," and the question only now remains, whether the bridegroom will say "yes."'

The nature of the answer may be easily conceived; nor is it necessary to dwell upon the splendour of the ceremonial, which, to atone for his late unmerited severity, Henry honoured with his own presence. Amelot and Rose were shortly afterwards united, old Flammock having been previously created a gentleman of coat armour, that the gentle Norman blood might, without utter derogation, mingle with the meaner stream which coloured the cheek in crimson, and meandered in azure over the lovely neck and bosom of the fair Fleming. There was nothing in the manner of the Constable towards his nephew and his bride which could infer a regret of the generous self-denial which he had exercised in favour of their

youthful passion; but he soon after accepted a high command in the troops destined to invade Ireland, and his name is found among the highest in the roll of the chivalrous Normans who first united that fair island to the English crown.

Eveline, restored to her own fair castle and domains, failed not to provide for her confessor, as well as for her old soldiers, servants, and retainers, forgetting their errors, and remembering their fidelity. The confessor was restored to the flesh-pots of Egypt, more congenial to his habits than the meagre fare of his convent. Even Gillian had the means of subsistence, since to punish her would have been to distress the faithful Raoul. They quarrelled for the future part of their lives in plenty, just as they had formerly quarrelled in poverty; for wrangling curs will fight over a banquet as fiercely as over a bare bone. Raoul died first, and Gillian, having lost her whetstone, found that as her youthful looks decayed her wit turned somewhat blunt. She therefore prudently commenced devotee, and spent hours in long panegyrics on her departed husband.

The only serious cause of vexation which I can trace the Lady Eveline having been tried with arose from a visit of her Saxon relative, made with much form, but, unfortunately, at the very time which the lady abbess had selected for that same purpose. The discord which arose between these honoured personages was of a double character, for they were Norman and Saxon, and, moreover, differed in opinion concerning the time of holding Easter. This, however, was but a slight gale to disturb the general serenity of Eveline; for with her unhoped-for union with Damian ended the trials and sorrows of THE BETROTHED.

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

FIRST SERIES

INTRODUCTION

TO

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

Sic itur ad astra.

THE preceding volume[1] of this collection concluded the last of the pieces originally published under the *nominis umbra* of the Author of *Waverley;* and the circumstances which rendered it impossible for the writer to continue longer in the possession of his incognito were communicated, in 1827, in the Introduction to the First Series of *Chronicles of the Canongate*, consisting, besides a biographical sketch of the imaginary chronicler, of three tales, entitled *The Highland Widow*, *The Two Drovers*,[2] and *The Surgeon's Daughter*. In the present volume the first named of these pieces is included, together with three detached stories,[3] which appeared the year after in the elegant compilation called *The Keepsake*. *The Surgeon's Daughter* it is thought better to defer until a succeeding volume[4] than to

Begin and break off in the middle.

I have, perhaps, said enough on former occasions of the misfortunes which led to the dropping of that mask under which I had, for a long series of years, enjoyed so large a portion of public favour. Through the success of those literary efforts I had been enabled to indulge most of the tastes which a retired person of my station might be supposed to entertain. In the pen of this nameless romancer I seemed to possess something like the secret fountain of coined gold and pearls vouchsafed to the traveller of the Eastern tale; and no doubt believed that I might venture, without silly im-

[1] [*Woodstock*, according to the chronological order of original publication.]
[2] [Printed in the present edition along with *The Talisman*, vol. xx.]
[3] [In the present edition printed along with *The Talisman*, vol. xx.]
[4] [See vol. xxv.]

prudence, to extend my personal expenditure considerably beyond what I should have thought of had my means been limited to the competence which I derived from inheritance, with the moderate income of a professional situation. I bought, and built, and planted, and was considered by myself, as by the rest of the world, in the safe possession of an easy fortune. My riches, however, like the other riches of this world, were liable to accidents, under which they were ultimately destined to make unto themselves wings and fly away. The year 1825, so disastrous to many branches of industry and commerce, did not spare the market of literature; and the sudden ruin that fell on so many of the booksellers could scarcely have been expected to leave unscathed one whose career had of necessity connected him deeply and extensively with the pecuniary transactions of that profession. In a word, almost without one note of premonition, I found myself involved in the sweeping catastrophe of the unhappy time, and called on to meet the demands of creditors upon commercial establishments with which my fortunes had long been bound up, to the extent of no less a sum than one hundred and twenty thousand pounds.

The Author having, however rashly, committed his pledges thus largely to the hazards of trading companies, it behoved him, of course, to abide the consequences of his conduct, and, with whatever feelings, he surrendered on the instant every shred of property which he had been accustomed to call his own. It became vested in the hands of gentlemen whose integrity, prudence, and intelligence were combined with all possible liberality and kindness of disposition, and who readily afforded every assistance towards the execution of plans in the success of which the Author contemplated the possibility of his ultimate extrication, and which were of such a nature that had assistance of this sort been withheld, he could have had little prospect of carrying them into effect. Among other resources which occurred was the project of that complete and corrected edition of his novels and romances (whose real parentage had of necessity been disclosed at the moment of the commercial convulsions alluded to), which has now advanced with unprecedented favour nearly to its close; but as he purposed also to continue, for the behoof of those to whom he was indebted, the exercise of his pen in the same path of literature, so long as the taste of his countrymen should seem to approve of his efforts, it appeared to him that it would have been an idle piece of affectation to attempt getting up a new incognito,

after his original visor had been thus dashed from his brow. Hence the personal narrative prefixed to the first work of fiction which he put forth after the paternity of the Waverley Novels had come to be publicly ascertained; and though many of the particulars originally avowed in that notice have been unavoidably adverted to in the prefaces and notes to some of the preceding volumes of the present collection, it is now reprinted as it stood at the time, because some interest is generally attached to a coin or medal struck on a special occasion, as expressing, perhaps, more faithfully than the same artist could have afterwards conveyed the feelings of the moment that gave it birth.

The Introduction to the First Series of *Chronicles of the Canongate* [1827] ran, then, in these words:

All who are acquainted with the early history of the Italian stage are aware that *arlechino* is not, in his original conception, a mere worker of marvels with his wooden sword, a jumper in and out of windows, as upon our theatre, but, as his parti-coloured jacket implies, a buffoon or clown, whose mouth, far from being eternally closed, as amongst us, is filled, like that of Touchstone, with quips, and cranks, and witty devices, very often delivered extempore. It is not easy to trace how he became possessed of his black vizard, which was anciently made in the resemblance of the face of a cat; but it seems that the mask was essential to the performance of the character, as will appear from the following theatrical anecdote: —

An actor on the Italian stage permitted at the *foire du St. Germain*, in Paris, was renowned for the wild, venturous, and extravagant wit, the brilliant sallies and fortunate repartees, with which he prodigally seasoned the character of the parti-coloured jester. Some critics, whose good-will towards a favourite performer was stronger than their judgment, took occasion to remonstrate with the successful actor on the subject of the grotesque vizard. They went wilily to their purpose, observing, that his classical and Attic wit, his delicate vein of humour, his happy turn for dialogue, were rendered burlesque and ludicrous by this unmeaning and bizarre disguise, and that those attributes would become far more impressive if aided by the spirit of his eye and the expression of his natural features. The actor's vanity was easily so far engaged as to induce him to make the experiment. He played harlequin

barefaced, but was considered on all hands as having made a total failure. He had lost the audacity which a sense of incognito bestowed, and with it all the reckless play of raillery which gave vivacity to his original acting. He cursed his advisers, and resumed his grotesque vizard; but, it is said, without ever being able to regain the careless and successful levity which the [illegible]sness of the disguise had formerly bestowed.

Perhaps the [illegible] *Waverley* is now about to incur a risk of the same ki[illegible] endanger his popularity by having laid aside his incogn[illegible] It is certainly not a voluntary experiment, like that of harlequ[illegible] on it was my original intention never to have avowed the [illegible]during my lifetime, and the original manuscripts were [illegible] though by the care of others rather than mine, with the purpose of supplying the necessary evide[illegible] when the period of announcing it should arrive.[1] But the affairs of my publishers having unfortunately passed into a [illegible]nagement different from their own, I had no right any longer to rely upon secrecy in that quarter; and thus my mask, like my Aunt Dinah's in *Tristram Shandy*, having begun to wax a little threadbare about the chin, it became time to lay it aside with a good grace, unless I desired it should fall in pieces from my face, which was now become likely.

Yet I had not the slightest intention of selecting the time and place in which the disclosure was finally made; nor was there any concert betwixt my learned and respected friend Lord Meadowbank[2] and myself upon that occasion. It was, as the reader is probably aware, upon the 23d February last [1827], at a public meeting, called for establishing a professional Theatrical Fund in Edinburgh, that the communication took place.[3] Just before we sat down to table, Lord Meadowbank asked me privately whether I was still anxious to preserve my incognito on the subject of what were called the Waverley Novels? I did not immediately see the purpose of his lordship's question, although I certainly might have been led to infer it, and replied that the secret had now of necessity become known to so many people that I was indifferent on the subject. Lord Meadowbank was thus induced, while doing me the great honour of proposing my health to the meeting, to say something

[1] These manuscripts are at present (August 1831) advertised for public sale, which is an addition, though a small one, to other annoyances.
[2] One of the Supreme Judges of Scotland, termed Lords of Council and Session.
[3] See Appendix.

on the subject of these Novels, so strongly connecting them with me as the author, that, by remaining silent, I must have stood convicted, either of the actual paternity, or of the still greater crime of being supposed willing to receive indirectly praise to which I had no just title. I thus found myself suddenly and unexpectedly placed in the confessional, and had only time to recollect that I had been guided thither by a most friendly hand, and could not, perhaps, find a better public opportunity to lay down a disguise which began to resemble that of a detected masquerader. I had therefore the task of avowing myself, to the numerous and respectable company assembled, as the sole and unaided author of these Novels of Waverley, the paternity of which was likely at one time to have formed a controversy of some celebrity, for the ingenuity with which some instructors of the public gave their assurance on the subject was extremely persevering.

I now think it further necessary to say, that, while I take on myself all the merits and demerits attending these compositions, I am bound to acknowledge with gratitude hints of subjects and legends which I have received from various quarters, and have occasionally used as a foundation of my fictitious compositions, or woven up with them in the shape of episodes. I am bound, in particular, to acknowledge the unremitting kindness of Mr. Joseph Train, supervisor of excise at Dumfries, to whose unwearied industry I have been indebted for many curious traditions and points of antiquarian interest. It was Mr. Train who brought to my recollection the history of Old Mortality, although I myself had had a personal interview with that celebrated wanderer so far back as about 1792, when I found him on his usual task. He was then engaged in repairing the gravestones of the Covenanters who had died while imprisoned in the Castle of Dunnottar, to which many of them were committed prisoners at the period of Argyle's rising; their place of confinement is still called the Whigs' Vault. Mr. Train, however, procured for me far more extensive information concerning this singular person, whose name was Paterson, than I had been able to acquire during my own short conversation with him.[1] He was, as I think I have somewhere already stated, a native of the parish of Closeburn, in Dumfriesshire, and it is believed that domestic affliction, as well as devotional feeling, induced him to commence the wandering mode of life which he pursued for a very long period. It is more than

[1] See, for some further particulars, the notes to *Old Mortality*.

twenty years since Robert Paterson's death, which took place on the highroad near Lockerby, where he was found exhausted and expiring. The white pony, the companion of his pilgrimage, was standing by the side of its dying master, the whole furnishing a scene not unfitted for the pencil. These particulars I had from Mr. Train.

Another debt, which I pay most willingly, I owe to an unknown correspondent, a lady,[1] who favoured me with the history of the upright and high-principled female whom, in *The Heart of Midlothian*, I have termed Jeanie Deans. The circumstance of her refusing to save her sister's life by an act of perjury, and undertaking a pilgrimage to London to obtain her pardon, are both represented as true by my fair and obliging correspondent; and they led me to consider the possibility of rendering a fictitious personage interesting by mere dignity of mind and rectitude of principle, assisted by unpretending good sense and temper, without any of the beauty, grace, talent, accomplishment, and wit to which a heroine of romance is supposed to have a prescriptive right. If the portrait was received with interest by the public, I am conscious how much it was owing to the truth and force of the original sketch, which I regret that I am unable to present to the public, as it was written with much feeling and spirit.

Old and odd books, and a considerable collection of family legends, formed another quarry, so ample, that it was much more likely that the strength of the labourer should be exhausted than that material should fail. I may mention, for example's sake, that the terrible catastrophe of *The Bride of Lammermuir* actually occurred in a Scottish family of rank. The female relative, by whom the melancholy tale was communicated to me many years since, was a near connexion of the family in which the event happened, and always told it with an appearance of melancholy mystery, which enhanced the interest. She had known, in her youth, the brother who rode before the unhappy victim to the fatal altar, who, though then a mere boy, and occupied almost entirely with the gaiety of his own appearance in the bridal procession, could not but remark that the hand of his sister was moist, and cold as that of a statue. It is unnecessary further to withdraw the veil from this scene of family distress, nor, although it occurred more than a hundred years since, might it be altogether agreeable to the representatives of the families concerned in the narrative. It may be proper to

[1] The late Mrs. Goldie.

say, that the events alone are imitated; but I had neither the means nor intention of copying the manners, or tracing the characters, of the persons concerned in the real story.

Indeed, I may here state generally, that, although I have deemed historical personages free subjects of delineation, I have never on any occasion violated the respect due to private life. It was indeed impossible that traits proper to persons, both living and dead, with whom I have had intercourse in society, should not have risen to my pen in such works as *Waverley* and those which followed it. But I have always studied to generalise the portraits, so that they should still seem, on the whole, the productions of fancy, though possessing some resemblance to real individuals. Yet I must own my attempts have not in this last particular been uniformly successful. There are men whose characters are so peculiarly marked, that the delineation of some leading and principal feature inevitably places the whole person before you in his individuality. Thus, the character of Jonathan Oldbuck, in *The Antiquary*, was partly founded on that of an old friend of my youth, to whom I am indebted for introducing me to Shakspeare, and other invaluable favours; but I thought I had so completely disguised the likeness that his features could not be recognised by any one now alive. I was mistaken, however, and indeed had endangered what I desired should be considered as a secret; for I afterwards learned that a highly respectable gentleman, one of the few surviving friends of my father,[1] and an acute critic, had said, upon the appearance of the work, that he was now convinced who was the author of it, as he recognised, in the Antiquary of Monkbarns, traces of the character of a very intimate friend of my father's family.

I may here also notice, that the sort of exchange of gallantry which is represented as taking place betwixt the Baron of Bradwardine [Waverley] and Colonel Talbot is a literal fact. The real circumstances of the anecdote, alike honourable to Whig and Tory, are these:—

Alexander Stewart of Invernahyle—a name which I cannot write without the warmest recollections of gratitude to the friend of my childhood, who first introduced me to the Highlands, their traditions and their manners—had been engaged actively in the troubles of 1745. As he charged at the battle of Preston with his clan, the Stewarts of Appine, he saw an officer of the opposite army standing alone by a battery of four cannon, of

[1] James Chalmers, Esq., solicitor-at-law, London, who died during the publication of the Collected Edition of these novels. (Aug. 1831.)

which he discharged three on the advancing Highlanders, and then drew his sword. Invernahyle rushed on him, and required him to surrender. 'Never to rebels!' was the undaunted reply, accompanied with a lounge, which the Highlander received on his target; but instead of using his sword in cutting down his now defenceless antagonist, he employed it in parrying the blow of a Lochaber axe, aimed at the officer by the miller, one of his own followers, a grim-looking old Highlander, whom I remember to have seen. Thus overpowered, Lieutenant-Colonel Allan Whitefoord, a gentleman of rank and consequence, as well as a brave officer, gave up his sword, and with it his purse and watch, which Invernahyle accepted, to save them from his followers. After the affair was over, Mr. Stewart sought out his prisoner, and they were introduced to each other by the celebrated John Roy Stewart, who acquainted Colonel Whitefoord with the quality of his captor, and made him aware of the necessity of receiving back his property, which he was inclined to leave in the hands into which it had fallen. So great became the confidence established betwixt them, that Invernahyle obtained from the Chevalier his prisoner's freedom upon parole; and soon afterwards, having been sent back to the Highlands to raise men, he visited Colonel Whitefoord at his own house, and spent two happy days with him and his Whig friends, without thinking, on either side, of the civil war which was then raging.

When the battle of Culloden put an end to the hopes of Charles Edward, Invernahyle, wounded and unable to move, was borne from the field by the faithful zeal of his retainers. But, as he had been a distinguished Jacobite, his family and property were exposed to the system of vindictive destruction too generally carried into execution through the country of the insurgents. It was now Colonel Whitefoord's turn to exert himself, and he wearied all the authorities, civil and military, with his solicitations for pardon to the saver of his life, or at least for a protection for his wife and family. His applications were for a long time unsuccessful. 'I was found with the mark of the beast upon me in every list' was Invernahyle's expression. At length Colonel Whitefoord applied to the Duke of Cumberland, and urged his suit with every argument which he could think of. Being still repulsed, he took his commission from his bosom, and, having said something of his own and his family's exertions in the cause of the house of Hanover, begged to resign his situation in their service, since he could not be permitted to show his gratitude to the person to whom he owed

his life. The Duke, struck with his earnestness, desired him to take up his commission, and granted the protection required for the family of Invernahyle.

The chieftain himself lay concealed in a cave near his own house, before which a small body of regular soldiers were encamped. He could hear their muster-roll called every morning, and their drums beat to quarters at night, and not a change of the sentinels escaped him. As it was suspected that he was lurking somewhere on the property, his family were closely watched, and compelled to use the utmost precaution in supplying him with food. One of his daughters, a child of eight or ten years old, was employed as the agent least likely to be suspected. She was an instance among others, that a time of danger and difficulty creates a premature sharpness of intellect. She made herself acquainted among the soldiers, till she became so familiar to them that her motions escaped their notice; and her practice was to stroll away into the neighbourhood of the cave, and leave what slender supply of food she carried for that purpose under some remarkable stone, or the root of some tree, where her father might find it as he crept by night from his lurking-place. Times became milder, and my excellent friend was relieved from proscription by the Act of Indemnity. Such is the interesting story which I have rather injured than improved by the manner in which it is told in *Waverley*.

This incident, with several other circumstances illustrating the Tales in question, was communicated by me to my late lamented friend, William Erskine, a Scottish judge, by the title of Lord Kinedder, who afterwards reviewed with far too much partiality the *Tales of my Landlord* for the *Quarterly Review* of January 1817.[1] In the same article are contained other illustrations of the Novels, with which I supplied my accomplished friend, who took the trouble to write the review. The reader who is desirous of such information will find the original of Meg Merrilies, and I believe of one or two other personages of the same cast of character, in the article referred to.

I may also mention, that the tragic and savage circumstances which are represented as preceding the birth of Allan M'Aulay, in *The Legend of Montrose*, really happened in the family of Stewart of Ardvoirlich. The wager about the candlesticks, whose place was supplied by Highland torch-bearers, was laid and won by one of the MacDonalds of Keppoch.

[1] Lord Kinedder died in August 1822. Eheu! (Aug. 1831.)

There can be but little amusement in winnowing out the few grains of truth which are contained in this mass of empty fiction. I may, however, before dismissing the subject, allude to the various localities which have been affixed to some of the scenery introduced into these novels, by which, for example, Wolf's Hope is identified with Fast Castle in Berwickshire, Tillietudlem with Draphane in Clydesdale, and the valley in *The Monastery*, called Glendearg, with the dale of the river Allan, above Lord Somerville's villa, near Melrose. I can only say that, in these and other instances, I had no purpose of describing any particular local spot; and the resemblance must therefore be of that general kind which necessarily exists between scenes of the same character. The iron-bound coast of Scotland affords upon its headlands and promontories fifty such castles as Wolf's Hope; every county has a valley more or less resembling Glendearg; and if castles like Tillietudlem, or mansions like the Baron of Bradwardine's, are now less frequently to be met with, it is owing to the rage of indiscriminate destruction, which has removed or ruined so many monuments of antiquity, when they were not protected by their inaccessible situation.[1]

The scraps of poetry which have been in most cases tacked to the beginning of chapters in these novels are sometimes quoted either from reading or from memory, but, in the general case, are pure invention. I found it too troublesome to turn to the collection of the British poets to discover apposite mottoes, and, in the situation of the theatrical mechanist, who, when the white paper which represented his shower of snow was exhausted, continued the storm by snowing brown, I drew on my memory as long as I could, and, when that failed, eked it out with invention. I believe that, in some cases, where actual names are affixed to the supposed quotations, it would be to little purpose to seek them in the works of the authors referred to. In some cases I have been entertained when Dr. Watts and other graver authors have been ransacked in vain for stanzas for which the novelist alone was responsible.

And now the reader may expect me, while in the confessional, to explain the motives why I have so long persisted in disclaiming the works of which I am now writing. To this it would be difficult to give any other reply save that of Corporal Nym.

[1] I would particularly intimate the Kaim of Urie, on the eastern coast of Scotland, as having suggested an idea for the tower called Wolf's Crag, which the public more generally identified with the ancient tower of Fast Castle.

it was the Author's humour or caprice for the time. I hope it will not be construed into ingratitude to the public, to whose indulgence I have owed my *sang froid* much more than to any merit of my own, if I confess that I am, and have been, more indifferent to success, or to failure, as an author than may be the case with others, who feel more strongly the passion for literary fame, probably because they are justly conscious of a better title to it. It was not until I had attained the age of thirty years that I made any serious attempt at distinguishing myself as an author; and at that period men's hopes, desires, and wishes have usually acquired something of a decisive character, and are not eagerly and easily diverted into a new channel. When I made the discovery — for to me it was one — that by amusing myself with composition, which I felt a delightful occupation, I could also give pleasure to others, and became aware that literary pursuits were likely to engage in future a considerable portion of my time, I felt some alarm that I might acquire those habits of jealousy and fretfulness which have lessened, and even degraded, the character even of great authors, and rendered them, by their petty squabbles and mutual irritability, the laughing-stock of the people of the world. I resolved, therefore, in this respect to guard my breast, perhaps an unfriendly critic may add, my brow, with triple brass,[1] and as much as possible to avoid resting my thoughts and wishes upon literary success, lest I should endanger my own peace of mind and tranquillity by literary failure. It would argue either stupid apathy or ridiculous affectation to say that I have been insensible to the public applause, when I have been honoured with its testimonies; and still more highly do I prize the invaluable friendships which some temporary popularity has enabled me to form among those of my contemporaries most distinguished by talents and genius, and which I venture to hope now rest upon a basis more firm than the circumstances which gave rise to them. Yet feeling all these advantages as a man ought to do, and must do, I may say, with truth and confidence, that I have, I think, tasted of the intoxicating cup with moderation, and that I have never, either in conversation or correspondence, encouraged discussions respecting my own literary pursuits. On the contrary, I have usually found such topics, even when introduced from motives most flattering to myself, rather embarrassing and disagreeable.

[1] Not altogether impossible, when it is considered that I have been at the bar since 1792. (Aug. 1831.)

I have now frankly told my motives for concealment, so far as I am conscious of having any, and the public will forgive the egotism of the detail as what is necessarily connected with it. The author, so long and loudly called for, has appeared on the stage and made his obeisance to the audience. Thus far his conduct is a mark of respect. To linger in their presence would be intrusion.

I have only to repeat that I avow myself in print, as formerly in words, the sole and unassisted author of all the novels published as works of the 'Author of *Waverley*.' I do this without shame, for I am unconscious that there is anything in their composition which deserves reproach, either on the score of religion or morality, and without any feeling of exultation, because, whatever may have been their temporary success, I am well aware how much their reputation depends upon the caprice of fashion; and I have already mentioned the precarious tenure by which it is held as a reason for displaying no great avidity in grasping at the possession.

I ought to mention, before concluding, that twenty persons, at least, were, either from intimacy or from the confidence which circumstances rendered necessary, participant of this secret; and as there was no instance, to my knowledge, of any one of the number breaking faith, I am the more obliged to them, because the slight and trivial character of the mystery was not qualified to inspire much respect in those entrusted with it. Nevertheless, like Jack the Giant-Killer, I was fully confident in the advantage of my 'coat of darkness,' and had it not been from compulsory circumstances, I would have indeed been very cautious how I parted with it.

As for the work which follows, it was meditated, and in part printed, long before the avowal of the novels took place, and originally commenced with a declaration that it was neither to have introduction nor preface of any kind. This long proem, prefixed to a work intended not to have any, may, however, serve to show how human purposes, in the most trifling as well as the most important affairs, are liable to be controlled by the course of events. Thus, we begin to cross a strong river with our eyes and our resolution fixed on that point of the opposite shore on which we purpose to land; but, gradually giving way to the torrent, are glad, by the aid perhaps of branch or bush, to extricate ourselves at some distant, and perhaps dangerous, landing-place, much farther down the stream than that on which we had fixed our intentions.

Hoping that the courteous reader will afford to a known and familiar acquaintance some portion of the favour which he extended to a disguised candidate for his applause, I beg leave to subscribe myself his obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD, *October* 1, 1827.

Such was the little narrative which I thought proper to put forth in October 1827, nor have I much to add to it now. About to appear for the first time in my own name in this department of letters, it occurred to me that something in the shape of a periodical publication might carry with it a certain air of novelty, and I was willing to break, if I may so express it, the abruptness of my personal forthcoming by investing an imaginary coadjutor with at least as much distinctness of individual existence as I had ever previously thought it worth while to bestow on shadows of the same convenient tribe. Of course, it had never been in my contemplation to invite the assistance of any real person in the sustaining of my quasi-editorial character and labours. It had long been my opinion that anything like a literary picnic is likely to end in suggesting comparisons, justly termed odious, and therefore to be avoided; and, indeed, I had also had some occasion to know that promises of assistance, in efforts of that order, are apt to be more magnificent than the subsequent performance. I therefore planned a miscellany, to be dependent, after the old fashion, on my own resources alone, and although conscious enough that the moment which assigned to the Author of *Waverley* 'a local habitation and a name' had seriously endangered his spell, I felt inclined to adopt the sentiment of my old hero Montrose, and to say to myself, that in literature, as in war,

> He either fears his fate too much.
> Or his deserts are small,
> Who dares not put it to the touch,
> To win or lose it all.

To the particulars explanatory of the plan of these Chronicles, which the reader is presented with in chapter ii. by the imaginary editor, Mr. Croftangry, I have now to add, that the lady, termed in his narrative Mrs. Bethune Baliol, was designed to shadow out in its leading points the interesting character of a dear friend of mine, Mrs. Murray Keith,[1] whose death occurring

[1] See Keiths of Craig. Note 13.

shortly before had saddened a wide circle much attached to her, as well for her genuine virtue and amiable qualities of disposition as for the extent of information which she possessed, and the delightful manner in which she was used to communicate it. In truth, the Author had, on many occasions, been indebted to her vivid memory for the *substratum* of his Scottish fictions; and she accordingly had been, from an early period, at no loss to fix the Waverley Novels on the right culprit.

In the sketch of Chrystal Croftangry's own history, the Author has been accused of introducing some not polite allusions to respectable living individuals; but he may safely, he presumes, pass over such an insinuation. The first of the narratives which Mr. Croftangry proceeds to lay before the public, *The Highland Widow*, was derived from Mrs. Murray Keith,[1] and is given, with the exception of a few additional circumstances — the introduction of which I am rather inclined to regret — very much as the excellent old lady used to tell the story. Neither the Highland cicerone MacTurk [MacLeish] nor the demure waiting-woman were drawn from imagination; and on re-reading my tale, after the lapse of a few years, and comparing its effect with my remembrance of my worthy friend's oral narration, which was certainly extremely affecting, I cannot but suspect myself of having marred its simplicity by some of those interpolations which, at the time when I penned them, no doubt passed with myself for embellishments.

The next tale, entitled *The Two Drovers*, I learned from another old friend, the late George Constable, Esq., of Wallace-Craigie, near Dundee, whom I have already introduced to my reader as the [illegible]nal Antiquary of Monkbarns. He had been present, I think, at the trial at Carlisle, and seldom mentioned the venerable judge's charge to the jury without shedding tears, which had peculiar pathos, as flowing down features carrying rather a sarcastic or almost a cynical expression.

This worthy gentleman's reputation for shrewd Scottish sense, knowledge of our national antiquities, and a racy humour peculiar to himself, must be still remembered. For myself, I have pride in recording that for many years we were, in Wordsworth's language,

> A pair of friends, though I was young,
> And 'George' was seventy-two

W. S.

ABBOTSFORD, *Aug.* 15, 1831.

[1] [See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. ix. pp. 173, 174.]

THE CANONGATE, TOLBOOTH, EDINBURGH.
From a recent photograph.

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

CHAPTER I

Mr. Chrystal Croftangry's Account of Himself

Sic itur ad astra.

'THIS is the path to heaven.' Such is the ancient motto attached to the armorial bearings of the Canongate, and which is inscribed, with greater or less propriety, upon all the public buildings, from the church to the pillory, in the ancient quarter of Edinburgh which bears, or rather once bore, the same relation to the Good Town that Westminster does to London, being still possessed of the palace of the sovereign, as it formerly was dignified by the residence of the principal nobility and gentry. I may, therefore, with some propriety, put the same motto at the head of the literary undertaking by which I hope to illustrate the hitherto undistinguished name of Chrystal Croftangry.

The public may desire to know something of an author who pitches at such height his ambitious expectations. The gentle reader, therefore — for I am much of Captain Bobadil's humour, and could to no other extend myself so far — the *gentle* reader, then, will be pleased to understand, that I am a Scottish gentleman of the old school, with a fortune, temper, and person rather the worse for wear. I have known the world for these forty years, having written myself man nearly since that period, and I do not think it is much mended. But this is an opinion which I keep to myself when I am among younger folk, for I recollect, in my youth, quizzing the sexagenarians who carried back their ideas of a perfect state of society to the days of laced coats and triple ruffles, and some of them to the blood and blows of the Forty-five. Therefore I am cautious in exercising the right of censorship, which is supposed to be acquired by men arrived

at, or approaching, the mysterious period of life when the numbers of seven and nine multiplied into each other form what sages have termed the grand climacteric.

Of the earlier part of my life it is only necessary to say, that I swept the boards of the Parliament House with the skirts of my gown for the usual number of years during which young lairds were in my time expected to keep term, got no fees, laughed and made others laugh, drank claret at Bayle's, Fortune's, and Walker's, and eat oysters in the Covenant Close.

Becoming my own master, I flung my gown at the bar keeper, and commenced gay man on my own account. In Edinburgh, I ran into all the expensive society which the place then afforded. When I went to my house in the shire of Lanark, I emulated to the utmost the expenses of men of large fortune, and had my hunters, my first-rate pointers, my game cocks, and feeders. I can more easily forgive myself for these follies than for others of a still more blamable kind, so indifferently cloaked over, that my poor mother thought herself obliged to leave my habitation, and betake herself to a small, inconvenient jointure-house, which she occupied till her death. I think, however, I was not exclusively to blame in this separation, and I believe my mother afterwards condemned herself for being too hasty. Thank God, the adversity which destroyed the means of continuing my dissipation restored me to the affections of my surviving parent!

My course of life could not last. I ran too fast to run long; and when I would have checked my career, I was perhaps too near the brink of the precipice. Some mishaps I prepared by my own folly, others came upon me unawares. I put my estate out to nurse to a fat man of business, who smothered the babe he should have brought back to me in health and strength, and, in dispute with this honest gentleman, I found, like a skilful general, that my position would be most judiciously assumed by taking it up near the Abbey of Holyrood.[1] It was then I first became acquainted with the quarter, which my little work will, I hope, render immortal, and grew familiar with those magnificent wilds, through which the kings of Scotland once chased the dark brown deer, but which were chiefly recommended to me in those days by their being inaccessible to those metaphysical persons whom the law of the neighbouring country terms John Doe and Richard Roe. In short, the pre-

[1] See Sanctuary of Holyrood. Note 14.

cincts of the palace are now best known as being a place of refuge at any time from all pursuit for civil debt.

Dire was the strife betwixt my quondam doer and myself; during which my motions were circumscribed, like those of some conjured demon, within a circle, which, beginning 'at the northern gate of the King's Park, thence running northward, is bounded on the left by the king's garden-wall, and the gutter, or kennel, in a line wherewith it crosses the High Street to the Water-gate, and passing through the same, is bounded by the walls of the tennis-court and physic-garden, etc. It then follows the wall of the churchyard, joins the north-west wall of St. Ann's yards, and going east to the clack mill-house, turns southward to the turnstile in the king's park-wall, and includes the whole King's Park within the sanctuary.'

These limits, which I abridge from the accurate Maitland, once marked the girth, or asylum, belonging to the Abbey of Holyrood, and which, being still an appendage to the royal palace, has retained the privilege of an asylum for civil debt. One would think the space sufficiently extensive for a man to stretch his limbs in, as, besides a reasonable proportion of level ground, considering that the scene lies in Scotland, it includes within its precincts the mountain of Arthur's Seat, and the rocks and pasture land called Salisbury Crags. But yet it is inexpressible how, after a certain time had elapsed, I used to long for Sunday, which permitted me to extend my walk without limitation. During the other six days of the week I felt a sickness of heart which, but for the speedy approach of the hebdomadal day of liberty, I could hardly have endured. I experienced the impatience of a mastiff, who tugs in vain to extend the limits which his chain permits.

Day after day I walked by the side of the kennel which divides the sanctuary from the unprivileged part of the Canongate; and though the month was July, and the scene the old town of Edinburgh, I preferred it to the fresh air and verdant turf which I might have enjoyed in the King's Park, or to the cool and solemn gloom of the portico which surrounds the palace. To an indifferent person either side of the gutter would have seemed much the same — the houses equally mean, the children as ragged and dirty, the carmen as brutal, the whole forming the same picture of low life in a deserted and impoverished quarter of a large city. But to me the gutter, or kennel, was what the brook Kidron was to Shimei: death was denounced against him should he cross it, doubtless because

it was known to his wisdom who pronounced the doom, that, from the time the crossing the stream was debarred, the devoted man's desire to transgress the precept would become irresistible, and he would be sure to draw down on his head the penalty which he had already justly incurred by cursing the anointed of God. For my part, all Elysium seemed opening on the other side of the kennel, and I envied the little blackguards who, stopping the current with their little damdikes of mud, had a right to stand on either side of the nasty puddle which best pleased them. I was so childish as even to make an occasional excursion across, were it only for a few yards, and felt the triumph of a schoolboy, who, trespassing in an orchard, hurries back again with a fluttering sensation of joy and terror, betwixt the pleasure of having executed his purpose and the fear of being taken or discovered.

I have sometimes asked myself, what I should have done in case of actual imprisonment, since I could not bear without impatience a restriction which is comparatively a mere trifle; but I really could never answer the question to my own satisfaction. I have all my life hated those treacherous expedients called *mezzo termini*, and it is possible with this disposition I might have endured more patiently an absolute privation of liberty than the more modified restrictions to which my residence in the sanctuary at this period subjected me. If, however, the feelings I then experienced were to increase in intensity according to the difference between a jail and my actual condition, I must have hanged myself, or pined to death; there could have been no other alternative.

Amongst many companions who forgot and neglected me of course, when my difficulties seemed to be inextricable, I had one true friend; and that friend was a barrister, who knew the laws of his country well, and, tracing them up to the spirit of equity and justice in which they originate, had repeatedly prevented, by his benevolent and manly exertions, the triumphs of selfish cunning over simplicity and folly. He undertook my cause, with the assistance of a solicitor of a character similar to his own. My quondam doer had ensconced himself chin-deep among legal trenches, hornworks, and covered ways; but my two protectors shelled him out of his defences, and I was at length a free man, at liberty to go or stay wheresoever my mind listed.

I left my lodgings as hastily as if it had been a pest-house; I did not even stop to receive some change that was due to me

on settling with my landlady, and I saw the poor woman stand at her door looking after my precipitate flight, and shaking her head as she wrapped the silver which she was counting for me in a separate piece of paper, apart from the store in her own moleskin purse. An honest Highlandwoman was Janet MacEvoy, and deserved a greater remuneration, had I possessed the power of bestowing it. But my eagerness of delight was too extreme to pause for explanation with Janet. On I pushed through the groups of children, of whose sports I had been so often a lazy, lounging spectator. I sprung over the gutter as if it had been the fatal Styx, and I a ghost, which, eluding Pluto's authority, was making its escape from Limbo Lake. My friend had difficulty to restrain me from running like a madman up the street; and in spite of his kindness and hospitality, which soothed me for a day or two, I was not quite happy until I found myself aboard of a Leith smack, and, standing down the firth with a fair wind, might snap my fingers at the retreating outline of Arthur's Seat, to the vicinity of which I had been so long confined.

It is not my purpose to trace my future progress through life. I had extricated myself, or rather had been freed by my friends, from the brambles and thickets of the law, but, as befell the sheep in the fable, a great part of my fleece was left behind me. Something remained, however: I was in the season for exertion, and, as my good mother used to say, there was always life for living folk. Stern necessity gave my manhood that prudence which my youth was a stranger to. I faced danger, I endured fatigue, I sought foreign climates, and proved that I belonged to the nation which is proverbially patient of labour and prodigal of life. Independence, like liberty to Virgil's shepherd, came late, but came at last, with no great affluence in its train, but bringing enough to support a decent appearance for the rest of my life, and to induce cousins to be civil, and gossips to say, 'I wonder who old Croft will make his heir? He must have picked up something, and I should not be surprised if it prove more than folk think of.'

My first impulse when I returned home was to rush to the house of my benefactor, the only man who had in my distress interested himself in my behalf. He was a snuff-taker, and it had been the pride of my heart to save the *ipsa corpora* of the first score of guineas I could hoard, and to have them converted into as tasteful a snuff-box as Rundell and Bridge could devise. This I had thrust for security into the breast of my

waistcoat, while, impatient to transfer it to the person for whom it was destined, I hastened to his house in Brown's Square. When the front of the house became visible, a feeling of alarm checked me. I had been long absent from Scotland, my friend was some years older than I; he might have been called to the congregation of the just. I paused, and gazed on the house, as if I had hoped to form some conjecture from the outward appearance concerning the state of the family within. I know not how it was, but the lower windows being all closed and no one stirring, my sinister forebodings were rather strengthened. I regretted now that I had not made inquiry before I left the inn where I alighted from the mail-coach. But it was too late; so I hurried on, eager to know the best or the worst which I could learn.

The brass-plate bearing my friend's name and designation was still on the door, and, when it was opened, the old domestic appeared a good deal older, I thought, than he ought naturally to have looked, considering the period of my absence. 'Is Mr. Sommerville at home?' said I, pressing forward.

'Yes, sir,' said John, placing himself in opposition to my entrance, 'he is at home, but ——'

'But he is not in,' said I. 'I remember your phrase of old, John. Come, I will step into his room, and leave a line for him.'

John was obviously embarrassed by my familiarity. I was some one, he saw, whom he ought to recollect, at the same time it was evident he remembered nothing about me.

'Ay, sir, my master is in, and in his own room, but ——'

I would not hear him out, but passed before him towards the well-known apartment.

A young lady came out of the room a little disturbed, as it seemed, and said, 'John, what is the matter?'

'A gentleman, Miss Nelly, that insists on seeing my master.'

'A very old and deeply indebted friend,' said I, 'that ventures to press myself on my much-respected benefactor on my return from abroad.'

'Alas, sir,' replied she, 'my uncle would be happy to see you, but ——'

At this moment, something was heard within the apartment like the falling of a plate, or glass, and immediately after my friend's voice called angrily and eagerly for his niece. She entered the room hastily, and so did I. But it was to see a spectacle compared with which that of my benefactor stretched on his bier would have been a happy one.

The easy-chair filled with cushions, the extended limbs swathed in flannel, the wide wrapping-gown and nightcap, showed illness; but the dimmed eye, once so replete with living fire; the blabber lip, whose dilation and compression used to give such character to his animated countenance; the stammering tongue, that once poured forth such floods of masculine eloquence, and had often swayed the opinion of the sages whom he addressed — all these sad symptoms evinced that my friend was in the melancholy condition of those in whom the principle of animal life has unfortunately survived that of mental intelligence. He gazed a moment at me, but then seemed insensible of my presence, and went on — he, once the most courteous and well-bred — to babble unintelligible but violent reproaches against his niece and servant, because he himself had dropped a tea-cup in attempting to place it on a table at his elbow. His eyes caught a momentary fire from his irritation; but he struggled in vain for words to express himself adequately, as, looking from his servant to his niece, and then to the table, he laboured to explain that they had placed it, though it touched his chair, at too great a distance from him.

The young person, who had naturally a resigned, Madonna-like expression of countenance, listened to his impatient chiding with the most humble submission, checked the servant, whose less delicate feelings would have entered on his justification, and gradually, by the sweet and soft tone of her voice, soothed to rest the spirit of causeless irritation.

She then cast a look towards me, which expressed, 'You see all that remains of him whom you call friend.' It seemed also to say, 'Your longer presence here can only be distressing to us all.'

'Forgive me, young lady,' I said, as well as tears would permit; 'I am a person deeply obliged to your uncle. My name is Croftangry.'

'Lord! and that I should not hae minded ye, Maister Croftangry,' said the servant. 'Ay, I mind my master had muckle fash about your job. I hae heard him order in fresh candles as midnight chappit, and till 't again. Indeed, ye had aye his gude word, Mr. Croftangry, for a' that folk said about you.'

'Hold your tongue, John,' said the lady, somewhat angrily; and then continued, addressing herself to me, 'I am sure, sir, you must be sorry to see my uncle in this state. I know you are his friend. I have heard him mention your name, and wonder he never heard from you.' A new cut this, and it went

to my heart. But she continued, 'I really do not know if it is right that any should —— If my uncle should know you, which I scarce think possible, he would be much affected, and the doctor says that any agitation —— But here comes Dr. —— to give his own opinion.'

Dr. —— entered. I had left him a middle-aged man; he was now an elderly one, but still the same benevolent Samaritan, who went about doing good, and thought the blessings of the poor as good a recompense of his professional skill as the gold of the rich.

He looked at me with surprise, but the young lady said a word of introduction, and I, who was known to the doctor formerly, hastened to complete it. He recollected me perfectly, and intimated that he was well acquainted with the reasons I had for being deeply interested in the fate of his patient. He gave me a very melancholy account of my poor friend, drawing me for that purpose a little apart from the lady. 'The light of life,' he said, 'was trembling in the socket; he scarcely expected it would ever leap up even into a momentary flash, but more was impossible.' He then stepped towards his patient, and put some questions, to which the poor invalid, though he seemed to recognise the friendly and familiar voice, answered only in a faltering and uncertain manner.

The young lady, in her turn, had drawn back when the doctor approached his patient. 'You see how it is with him,' said the doctor, addressing me; 'I have heard our poor friend, in one of the most eloquent of his pleadings, give a description of this very disease, which he compared to the tortures inflicted by Mezentius, when he chained the dead to the living. "The soul," he said, "is imprisoned in its dungeon of flesh, and, though retaining its natural and unalienable properties, can no more exert them than the captive inclosed within a prison-house can act as a free agent." Alas! to see *him*, who could so well describe what this malady was in others, a prey himself to its infirmities! I shall never forget the solemn tone of expression with which he summed up the incapacities of the paralytic — the deafened ear, the dimmed eye, the crippled limbs — in the noble words of Juvenal:

> Omni
> Membrorum damno, major dementia, quæ nec
> Nomina servorum nec vultum agnoscit amici.'

As the physician repeated these lines, a flash of intelligence

seemed to revive in the invalid's eye — sunk again — again struggled, and he spoke more intelligibly than before, and in the tone of one eager to say something which he felt would escape him unless said instantly. 'A question of death-bed — a question of death-bed, doctor — a reduction *ex capite lecti* — Withering against Wilibus — about the *morbus sonticus*. I pleaded the cause for the pursuer — I, and — and — why, I shall forget my own name — I, and — he that was the wittiest and the best-humoured man living ——'

The description enabled the doctor to fill up the blank, and the patient joyfully repeated the name suggested. 'Ay — ay,' he said, 'just he — Harry — poor Harry ——' The light in his eye died away, and he sunk back in his easy-chair.

'You have now seen more of our poor friend, Mr. Croftangry,' said the physician, 'than I dared venture to promise you; and now I must take my professional authority on me, and ask you to retire. Miss Sommerville will, I am sure, let you know if a moment should by any chance occur when her uncle can see you.'

What could I do? I gave my card to the young lady, and, taking my offering from my bosom — 'If my poor friend,' I said, with accents as broken almost as his own, 'should ask where this came from, name me; and say from the most obliged and most grateful man alive. Say, the gold of which it is composed was saved by grains at a time, and was hoarded with as much avarice as ever was a miser's. To bring it here I have come a thousand miles, and now, alas, I find him thus!'

I laid the box on the table, and was retiring with a lingering step. The eye of the invalid was caught by it, as that of a child by a glittering toy, and with infantine impatience he faltered out inquiries of his niece. With gentle mildness she repeated again and again who I was, and why I came, etc. I was about to turn and hasten from a scene so painful, when the physician laid his hand on my sleeve. 'Stop,' he said, 'there is a change.'

There was, indeed, and a marked one. A faint glow spread over his pallid features — they seemed to gain the look of intelligence which belongs to vitality — his eye once more kindled, his lip coloured, and, drawing himself up out of the listless posture he had hitherto maintained, he rose without assistance. The doctor and the servant ran to give him their support. He waved them aside, and they were contented to place themselves in such a position behind as might ensure against accident,

should his newly-acquired strength decay as suddenly as it had revived.

'My dear Croftangry,' he said, in the tone of kindness of other days, 'I am glad to see you returned. You find me but poorly; but my little niece here and Dr. —— are very kind. God bless you, my dear friend! we shall not meet again till we meet in a better world.'

I pressed his extended hand to my lips, I pressed it to my bosom, I would fain have flung myself on my knees; but the doctor, leaving the patient to the young lady and the servant, who wheeled forward his chair, and were replacing him in it, hurried me out of the room. 'My dear sir,' he said, 'you ought to be satisfied; you have seen our poor invalid more like his former self than he has been for months, or than he may be perhaps again until all is over. The whole faculty could not have ensured such an interval; I must see whether anything can be derived from it to improve the general health. Pray, begone.' The last argument hurried me from the spot, agitated by a crowd of feelings, all of them painful.

When I had overcome the shock of this great disappointment, I renewed gradually my acquaintance with one or two old companions, who, though of infinitely less interest to my feelings than my unfortunate friend, served to relieve the pressure of actual solitude, and who were not perhaps the less open to my advances, that I was a bachelor somewhat stricken in years, newly arrived from foreign parts, and certainly independent, if not wealthy.

I was considered as a tolerable subject of speculation by some, and I could not be burdensome to any; I was, therefore, according to the ordinary rule of Edinburgh hospitality, a welcome guest in several respectable families; but I found no one who could replace the loss I had sustained in my best friend and benefactor. I wanted something more than mere companionship could give me, and where was I to look for it? Among the scattered remnants of those that had been my gay friends of yore? Alas,

> Many a lad I loved was dead,
> And many a lass grown old.

Besides, all community of ties between us had ceased to exist, and such of former friends as were still in the world held their life in a different tenor from what I did.

Some had become misers, and were as eager in saving sixpence as ever they had been in spending a guinea. Some had

turned agriculturists: their talk was of oxen, and they were only fit companions for graziers. Some stuck to cards, and though no longer deep gamblers, rather played small game than sat out. This I particularly despised. The strong impulse of gaming, alas! I had felt in my time; it is as intense as it is criminal, but it produces excitation and interest, and I can conceive how it should become a passion with strong and powerful minds. But to dribble away life in exchanging bits of painted pasteboard round a green table, for the piddling concern of a few shillings, can only be excused in folly or superannuation. It is like riding on a rocking-horse, where your utmost exertion never carries you a foot forward; it is a kind of mental tread-mill, where you are perpetually climbing, but can never rise an inch. From these hints, my readers will perceive I am incapacitated for one of the pleasures of old age, which, though not mentioned by Cicero, is not the least frequent resource in the present day — the club-room and the snug hand at whist.

To return to my old companions. Some frequented public assemblies, like the ghost of Beau Nash, or any other beau of half a century back, thrust aside by tittering youth, and pitied by those of their own age. In fine, some went into devotion, as the French term it, and others, I fear, went to the devil; a few found resources in science and letters; one or two turned philosophers in a small way, peeped into microscopes, and became familiar with the fashionable experiments of the day. Some took to reading, and I was one of them.

Some grains of repulsion towards the society around me, some painful recollections of early faults and follies, some touch of displeasure with living mankind, inclined me rather to a study of antiquities, and particularly those of my own country. The reader, if I can prevail on myself to continue the present work, will probably be able to judge, in the course of it, whether I have made any useful progress in the study of the olden times.

I owed this turn of study, in part, to the conversation of my kind man of business, Mr. Fairscribe, whom I mentioned as having seconded the efforts of my invaluable friend, in bringing the cause on which my liberty and the remnant of my property depended to a favourable decision. He had given me a most kind reception on my return. He was too much engaged in his profession for me to intrude on him often, and perhaps his mind was too much trammelled with its details to permit his

being willingly withdrawn from them. In short, he was not a person of my poor friend Sommerville's expanded spirit, and rather a lawyer of the ordinary class of formalists, but a most able and excellent man. When my estate was sold, he retained some of the older title-deeds, arguing from his own feelings, that they would be of more consequence to the heir of the old family than to the new purchaser. And when I returned to Edinburgh, and found him still in the exercise of the profession to which he was an honour, he sent to my lodgings the old family Bible, which lay always on my father's table, two or three other mouldy volumes, and a couple of sheepskin bags, full of parchments and papers, whose appearance was by no means inviting.

The next time I shared Mr. Fairscribe's hospitable dinner, I failed not to return him due thanks for his kindness, which acknowledgment, indeed, I proportioned rather to the idea which I knew he entertained of the value of such things than to the interest with which I myself regarded them. But the conversation turning on my family, who were old proprietors in the Upper Ward of Clydesdale, gradually excited some interest in my mind; and when I retired to my solitary parlour, the first thing I did was to look for a pedigree, or sort of history of the family, or house of Croftangry, once of that Ilk, latterly of Glentanner. The discoveries which I made shall enrich the next chapter.

CHAPTER II

In which Mr. Croftangry Continues his Story

What 's property, dear Swift? I see it alter
From you to me, from me to Peter Walter.

POPE.

'CROFTANGRY — Croftandrew — Croftanridge — Croftandgrey — for sa mony wise hath the name been spellit — is weel known to be ane house of grit antiquity; and it is said that King Milcolumb, or Malcolm, being the first of our Scottish princes quha removit across the Firth of Forth, did reside and occupy ane palace at Edinburgh, and had there ane valziant man, who did him man-service, by keeping the croft, or corn-land, which was tilled for the convenience of the King's household, and was thence callit Croft-an-ri, that is to say, the King his croft; quhilk place, though now coverit with biggings, is to this day called Croftangry, and lyeth near to the royal palace. And whereas that some of those who bear this auld and honourable name may take scorn that it ariseth from the tilling of the ground, quhilk men account a slavish occupation, yet we ought to honour the pleugh and spade, seeing we all derive our being from our father Adam, whose lot it became to cultivate the earth, in respect of his fall and transgression.

'Also we have witness, as weel in holy writt as in profane history, of the honour in quhilk husbandrie was held of old, and how prophets have been taken from the pleugh, and great captains raised up to defend their ain countries, sic as Cincinnatus, and the like, who fought not the common enemy with the less valiancy that their arms had been exercised in halding the stilts of the pleugh, and their bellicose skill in driving of yauds and owsen.

'Likewise there are sindry honourable families, quhilk are now of our native Scottish nobility, and have clombe higher up the brae of preferment than what this house of Croftangry hath

done, quhilk shame not to carry in their warlike shield and insignia of dignity the tools and implements the quhilk their first forefathers exercised in labouring the croft-rig, or, as the poet Virgilius calleth it eloquently, in subduing the soil. And no doubt this ancient house of Croftangry, while it continued to be called of that Ilk, produced many worshipful and famous patriots, of quhom I now pretermit the names; it being my purpose, if God shall spare me life for sic ane pious *officium*, or duty, to resume the first part of my narrative touching the house of Croftangry, when I can set down at length the evidents and historical witness anent the facts which I shall allege, seeing that words, when they are unsupported by proofs, are like seed sown on the naked rocks, or like an house biggit on the flitting and faithless sands.'

Here I stopped to draw breath; for the style of my grandsire, the inditer of this goodly matter, was rather lengthy, as our American friends say. Indeed, I reserve the rest of the piece until I can obtain admission to the Bannatyne Club,[1] when I propose to throw off an edition, limited according to the rules of that erudite society, with a facsimile of the manuscript, emblazonry of the family arms, surrounded by their quartering, and a handsome disclamation of family pride, with *Hæc nos novimus esse nihil*, or *Vix ea nostra voco*.

In the meantime, to speak truth, I cannot but suspect that, though my worthy ancestor puffed vigorously to swell up the dignity of his family, we had never, in fact, risen above the rank of middling proprietors. The estate of Glentanner came to us by the intermarriage of my ancestor with Tib Sommeril, termed by the southrons Sommerville,[2] a daughter of that noble house, but I fear on what my great-grandsire calls 'the wrong side of the blanket.' Her husband, Gilbert, was killed fighting, as the *inquisitio post mortem* has it, '*sub vexillo regis, apud prælium juxta Branxton*, LIE *Flodden-field*.'

We had our share in other national misfortunes: were forfeited, like Sir John Colville of the Dale, for following our betters to the field of Langside; and, in the contentious times of the last Stuarts, we were severely fined for harbouring and resetting intercommuned ministers; and narrowly escaped giving a martyr to the calendar of the Covenant, in the person of the father of our family historian. He 'took the sheaf from the mare,' however, as the MS. expresses it, and agreed to accept of the terms of pardon offered by government, and

[1] See Note 15.

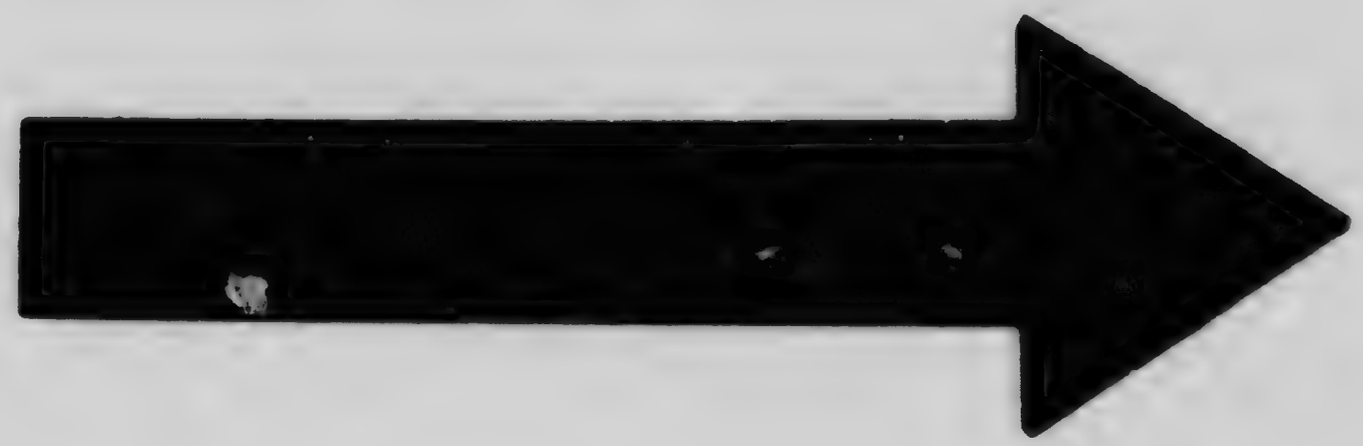
[2] See Sommerville Family. Note 16.

sign the bond, in evidence he would give no farther ground of offence. My grandsire glosses over his father's backsliding as smoothly as he can, and comforts himself with ascribing his want of resolution to his unwillingness to wreck the ancient name and family, and to permit his lands and lineage to fall under a doom of forfeiture.

'And indeed,' said the venerable compiler, 'as, praised be God, we seldom meet in Scotland with these belly-gods and voluptuaries, whilk are unnatural enough to devour their patrimony bequeathed to them by their forbears in chambering and wantonness, so that they come, with the prodigal son, to the husks and the swine-trough; and as I have the less to dreid the existence of such unnatural Neroes in mine own family to devour the substance of their own house like brute beasts out of mere gluttonie and epicurishnesse, so I need only warn mine descendants against over-hastily meddling with the mutations in state and in religion, which have been near-hand to the bringing this poor house of Croftangry to perdition, as we have shown more than once. And albeit I would not that my successors sat still altogether when called on by their duty to kirk and king; yet I would have them wait till stronger and walthier men than themselves were up, so that either they may have the better chance of getting through the day; or, failing of that, the conquering party having some fatter quarry to live upon, may, like gorged hawks, spare the smaller game.'

There was something in this conclusion which at first reading piqued me extremely, and I was so unnatural as to curse the whole concern, as poor, bald, pitiful trash, in which a silly old man was saying a great deal about nothing at all. Nay, my first impression was to thrust it into the fire, the rather that it reminded me, in no very flattering manner, of the loss of the family property, to which the compiler of the history was so much attached, in the very manner which he most severely reprobated. It even seemed to my aggrieved feelings that his unprescient gaze on futurity, in which he could not anticipate the folly of one of his descendants, who should throw away the whole inheritance in a few years of idle expense and folly, was meant as a personal incivility to myself, though written fifty or sixty years before I was born.

A little reflection made me ashamed of this feeling of impatience, and as I looked at the even, concise, yet tremulous, hand in which the manuscript was written, I could not help thinking, according to an opinion I have heard seriously main-



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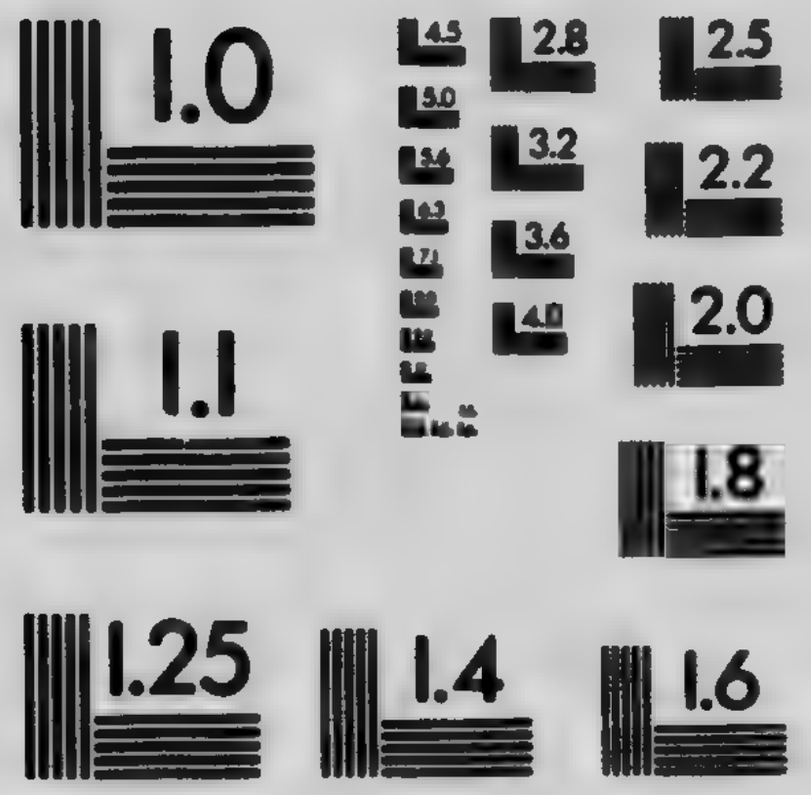

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tained, that something of a man's character may be conjectured from his handwriting. That neat, but crowded and constrained, small hand argued a man of a good conscience, well regulated passions, and, to use his own phrase, an upright walk in life; but it also indicated narrowness of spirit, inveterate prejudice, and hinted at some degree of intolerance, which, though not natural to the disposition, had arisen out of a limited education. The passages from Scripture and the classics, rather profusely than happily introduced, and written in a half-text character to mark their importance, illustrated that peculiar sort of pedantry which always considers the argument as gained if secured by a quotation. Then the flourished capital letters, which ornamented the commencement of each paragraph, and the name of his family and of his ancestors, whenever these occurred in the page, do they not express forcibly the pride and sense of importance with which the author undertook and accomplished his task? I persuaded myself, the whole was so complete a portrait of the man, that it would not have been a more undutiful act to have defaced his picture, or even to have disturbed his bones in his coffin, than to destroy his manuscript. I thought, for a moment, of presenting it to Mr. Fairscribe; but that confounded passage about the prodigal and swine-troth —— I settled at last it was as well to lock it up in my own bureau, with the intention to look at it no more.

But I do not know how it was that the subject began to sit nearer my heart than I was aware of, and I found myself repeatedly engaged in reading descriptions of farms which were no longer mine, and boundaries which marked the property of others. A love of the *natale solum*, if Swift be right in translating these words 'family estate,' began to awaken in my bosom; the recollections of my own youth adding little to it, save what was connected with field-sports. A career of pleasure is unfavourable for acquiring a taste for natural beauty, and still more so for forming associations of a sentimental kind, connecting us with the inanimate objects around us.

I had thought little about my estate while I possessed and was wasting it, unless as affording the rude materials out of which a certain inferior race of creatures, called tenants, were bound to produce, in a greater quantity than they actually did, a certain return called rent, which was destined to supply my expenses. This was my general view of the matter. Of particular places, I recollected that Garval Hill was a famous piece of rough upland pasture for rearing young colts and

teaching them to throw their feet; that Minion Burn had the finest yellow trout in the country; that Seggy Cleugh was unequalled for woodcocks; that Bengibbert Moors afforded excellent moorfowl-shooting; and that the clear bubbling fountain called the Harper's Well was the best recipe in the world on the morning after a 'hard-go' with my neighbour fox-hunters. Still these ideas recalled, by degrees, pictures of which I had since learned to appreciate the merit — scenes of silent loneliness, where extensive moors, undulating into wild hills, were only disturbed by the whistle of the plover or the crow of the heath-cock; wild ravines creeping up into mountains, filled with natural wood, and which, when traced downwards along the path formed by shepherds and nutters, were found gradually to enlarge and deepen, as each formed a channel to its own brook, sometimes bordered by steep banks of earth, often with the more romantic boundary of naked rocks or cliffs, crested with oak, mountain-ash, and hazel — all gratifying the eye the more that the scenery was, from the bare nature of the country around, totally unexpected.

I had recollections, too, of fair and fertile holms, or level plains, extending between the wooded banks and the bold stream of the Clyde, which, coloured like pure amber, or rather having the hue of the pebbles called cairngorm, rushes over sheets of rock and beds of gravel, inspiring a species of awe from the few and faithless fords which it presents, and the frequency of fatal accidents, now diminished by the number of bridges. These alluvial holms were frequently bordered by triple and quadruple rows of large trees, which gracefully marked their boundary, and dipped their long arms into the foaming stream of the river. Other places I remembered, which had been described by the old huntsman as the lodge of tremendous wildcats, or the spot where tradition stated the mighty stag to have been brought to bay, or where heroes, whose might was now as much forgotten, were said to have been slain by surprise, or in battle.

It is not to be supposed that these finished landscapes became visible before the eyes of my imagination, as the scenery of the stage is disclosed by the rising of the curtain. I have said, that I had looked upon the country around me, during the hurried and dissipated period of my life, with the eyes indeed of my body, but without those of my understanding. It was piece by piece, as a child picks out its lesson, that I began to recollect the beauties of nature which had

once surrounded me in the home of my forefathers. A natural taste for them must have lurked at the bottom of my heart, which awakened when I was in foreign countries, and becoming by degrees a favourite passion, gradually turned its eyes inwards, and ransacked the neglected stores which my memory had involuntarily recorded, and, when excited, exerted herself to collect and to complete.

I began now to regret more bitterly than ever the having fooled away my family property, the care and improvement of which I saw might have afforded an agreeable employment for my leisure, which only went to brood on past misfortunes, and increase useless repining. 'Had but a single farm been reserved, however small,' said I one day to Mr. Fairscribe, 'I should have had a place I could call my home, and something that I could call business.'

'It might have been managed,' answered Fairscribe; 'and for my part, I inclined to keep the mansion-house, mains, and some of the old family acres together; but both Mr. —— and you were of opinion that the money would be more useful.'

'True — true, my good friend,' said I; 'I was a fool then, and did not think I could incline to be Glentanner with £200 or £300 a-year, instead of Glentanner with as many thousands. I was then a haughty, pettish, ignorant, dissipated, broken-down Scottish laird; and thinking my imaginary consequence altogether ruined, I cared not how soon, or how absolutely, I was rid of everything that recalle it to my own memory or that of others.'

'And now it is like you have changed your mind?' said Fairscribe. 'Well, fortune is apt to circumduce the term upon us; but I think she may allow you to revise your condescendence.'

'How do you mean, my good friend?'

'Nay,' said Fairscribe, 'there is ill luck in averring till one is sure of his facts. I will look back on a file of newspapers, and to-morrow you shall hear from me; come, help yourself — I have seen you fill your glass higher.'

'And shall see it again,' said I, pouring out what remained of our bottle of claret; 'the wine is capital, and so shall our toast be. To your fireside, my good friend. And now we shall go beg a Scots song without foreign graces from my little siren Miss Katie.'

The next day accordingly I received a parcel from Mr. Fairscribe with a newspaper inclosed, among the advertise-

ments of which one was marked with a cross as requiring my attention. I read to my surprise —

'DESIRABLE ESTATE FOR SALE

'By order of the Lords of Council and Session, will be exposed to sale in the New Sessions House of Edinburgh, on Wednesday the 25th November 18—, all and whole the lands and barony of Glentanner, now called Castle Treddles, lying in the Middle Ward of Clydesdale and shire of Lanark, with the teinds, parsonage and vicarage, fishings in the Clyde, woods, mosses, moors, and pasturages,' etc. etc.

The advertisement went on to set forth the advantages of the soil, situation, natural beauties, and capabilities of improvement, not forgetting its being a freehold estate, with the particular polypus capacity of being sliced up into two, three, or, with a little assistance, four freehold qualifications, and a hint that the county was likely to be eagerly contested between two great families. The upset price at which 'the said lands and barony and others' were to be exposed was thirty years' purchase of the proven rental, which was about a fourth more than the property had fetched at the last sale. This, which was mentioned, I suppose, to show the improvable character of the land, would have given another some pain; but let me speak truth of myself in good as in evil — it pained not me. I was only angry that Fairscribe, who knew something generally of the extent of my funds, should have tantalised me by sending me information that my family property was in the market, since he must have known that the price was far out of my reach.

But a letter dropped from the parcel on the floor, which attracted my eye, and explained the riddle. A client of Mr. Fairscribe's, a monied man, thought of buying Glentanner, merely as an investment of money — it was even unlikely he would ever see it; and so the price of the whole being some thousand pounds beyond what cash he had on hand, this accommodating Dives would gladly take a partner in the sale for any detached farm, and would make no objection to its including the most desirable part of the estate in point of beauty, provided the price was made adequate. Mr. Fairscribe would take care I was not imposed on in the matter, and said in his card, he believed, if I really wished to make such a purchase, I had better go out and look at the premises, advising me, at the same time, to keep a strict incognito — an advice somewhat superfluous, since I am naturally of a retired and reserved disposition.

CHAPTER III

Mr. Croftangry, Inter Alia, Revisits Glentanner

Then sing of stage-coaches,
And fear no reproaches
For riding in one;
But daily be jogging,
Whilst, whistling and flogging,
Whilst, whistling and flogging,
The coachman drives on.

FARQUHAR.

DISGUISED in a grey surtout which had seen service, a white castor on my head, and a stout Indian cane in my hand, the next week saw me on the top of a mail-coach driving to the westward.

I like mail-coaches, and I hate them. I like them for my convenience, but I detest them for setting the whole world a-gadding, instead of sitting quietly still minding their own business, and preserving the stamp of originality of character which nature or education may have impressed on them. Off they go, jingling against each other in the rattling vehicle till they have no more variety of stamp in them than so many smooth shillings — the same even in their Welsh wigs and great-coats, each without more individuality than belongs to a partner of the company, as the waiter calls them, of the North coach.

Worthy Mr. Piper, best of contractors who ever furnished four frampal jades for public use, I bless you when I set out on a journey myself; the neat coaches under your contract render the intercourse, from Johnnie Groat's House to Ladykirk and Cornhill bridge, safe, pleasant, and cheap. But, Mr. Piper, you, who are a shrewd arithmetician, did it never occur to you to calculate how many fools' heads, which might have produced an idea or two in the year, if suffered to remain in quiet, get effectually addled by jolting to and fro in these flying chariots of yours; how many decent countrymen become conceited

bumpkins after a cattle-show dinner in the capital, which they could not have attended save for your means; how many decent country parsons return critics and spouters, by way of importing the newest taste from Edinburgh? And how will your conscience answer one day for carrying so many bonny lasses to barter modesty for conceit and levity at the metropolitan Vanity Fair?

Consider, too, the low rate to which you reduce human intellect. I do not believe your habitual customers have their ideas more enlarged than one of your coach-horses. They *knows* the road, like the English postilion, and they know nothing beside. They date, like the carriers at Gadshill, from the death of John Ostler;[1] the succession of guards forms a dynasty in their eyes; coachmen are their ministers of state, and an upset is to them a greater incident than a change of administration. Their only point of interest on the road is to save the time, and see whether the coach keeps the hour. This is surely a miserable degradation of human intellect. Take my advice, my good sir, and disinterestedly contrive that once or twice a quarter your most dexterous whip shall overturn a coachful of these superfluous travellers, *in terrorem* to those who, as Horace says, 'delight in the dust raised by your chariots.'

Your current and customary mail-coach passenger, too, gets abominably selfish, schemes successfully for the best seat, the freshest egg, the right cut of the sirloin. The mode of travelling is death to all the courtesies and kindnesses of life, and goes a great way to demoralise the character, and cause it to retrograde to barbarism. You allow us excellent dinners, but only twenty minutes to eat them; and what is the consequence? Bashful beauty sits on the one side of us, timid childhood on the other; respectable, yet somewhat feeble, old age is placed on our front; and all require those acts of politeness which ought to put every degree upon a level at the convivial board. But have we time — we the strong and active of the party — to perform the duties of the table to the more retired and bashful, to whom these little attentions are due? The lady should be pressed to her chicken, the old man helped to his favourite and tender slice, the child to his tart. But not a fraction of a minute have we to bestow on any other person than ourselves; and the prut-prut — tut-tut of the guard's discordant note summons us to the coach, the weaker party having gone without their dinner, and the able-bodied and active threatened with

[1] See the opening scene [of Act II.] of the First Part of Shakspeare's *Henry IV.*

indigestion, from having allowed victuals like a Leicestershire clown bolting bacon.

On the memorable occasion I am speaking of, I lost my breakfast, sheerly from obeying the commands of a respectable-looking old lady, who once required me to ring the bell, and another time to help the tea-kettle. I have some reason to think she was literally an 'old stager,' who laughed in her sleeve at my complaisance; so that I have sworn in my secret soul revenge upon her sex, and all such errant damsels, of whatever age and degree, whom I may encounter in my travels. I mean all this without the least ill-will to my friend the contractor, who, I think, has approached as near as any one is like to do towards accomplishing the modest wish of the *amatus* and *amata* of the *Peri Bathous*,

> Ye gods, annihilate but time and space,
> And make two lovers happy.

I intend to give Mr. P. his full revenge when I come to discuss the more recent enormity of steamboats; meanwhile, I shall only say of both these modes of conveyance, that

> There is no living with them or without them.

I am perhaps more critical on the —— mail-coach on this particular occasion, that I did not meet all the respect from the worshipful company in his Majesty's carriage that I think I was entitled to. I must say it for myself, that I bear, in my own opinion at least, not a vulgar point about me. My face has seen service, but there is still a good set of teeth, an aquiline nose, and a quick grey eye, set a little too deep under the eyebrow; and a cue of the kind once called military may serve to show that my civil occupations have been sometimes mixed with those of war. Nevertheless, two idle young fellows in the vehicle, or rather on the top of it, were so much amused with the deliberation which I used in ascending to the same place of eminence, that I thought I should have been obliged to pull them up a little. And I was in no good-humour, at an unsuppressed laugh following my descent, when set down at the angle where a cross-road, striking off from the main one, led me towards Glentanner, from which I was still nearly five miles distant.

It was an old-fashioned road, which, preferring ascents to sloughs, was led in a straight line over height and hollow, through moor and dale. Every object around me, as I passed

them in succession, reminded me of old days, and at the same time formed the strongest contrast with them possible. Unattended, on foot, with a small bundle in my hand, deemed scarce sufficient good company for the two shabby genteels with whom I had been lately perched on the top of a mail-coach, I did not seem to be the same person with the young prodigal who lived with the noblest and gayest in the land, and who, thirty years before, would, in the same country, have been on the back of a horse that had been victor for a plate, or smoking along in his travelling chaise-and-four. My sentiments were not less changed than my condition. I could quite well remember that my ruling sensation in the days of heady youth was a mere schoolboy's eagerness to get farthest forward in the race in which I had engaged, to drink as many bottles as ——, to be thought as good a judge of a horse as ——, to have the knowing cut of ——'s jacket. These were thy gods, O Israel!

Now I was a mere looker-on, seldom an unmoved, and sometimes an angry, spectator, but still a spectator only, of the pursuits of mankind. I felt how little my opinion was valued by those engaged in the busy turmoil, yet I exercised it with the profusion of an old lawyer retired from his profession, who thrusts himself into his neighbour's affairs, and gives advice where it is not wanted, merely under pretence of loving the crack of the whip.

I came amid these reflections to the brow of a hill, from which I expected to see Glentanner — a modest-looking, yet comfortable, house, its walls covered with the most productive fruit-trees in that part of the country, and screened from the most stormy quarters of the horizon by a deep and ancient wood, which overhung the neighbouring hill. The house was gone; a great part [illegible] wood was felled; and instead of the gentlemanlike [illegible] shrouded and embosomed among its old hereditary [illegible]ood Castle Treddles, a huge lumping four-square pile of [illegible], as bare as my nail, except for a paltry edging of [illegible]ed and lingering exotics, with an impoverished lawn stretched before it, which, instead of boasting deep green tapestry, enamelled with daisies and with crowsfoot and cowslips, showed an extent of nakedness, raked, indeed, and levelled, but, where the sown grasses had failed with drought, and the earth retained its natural complexion, seemed nearly as brown and bare as when it was newly dug up.

The house was a large fabric, which pretended to its name

of castle only from the front windows being finished in acute Gothic arches (being, by the way, the very reverse of the castellated style), and each angle graced with a turret about the size of a pepper-box. In every other respect it resembled a large town-house, which, like a fat burgess, had taken a walk to the country on a holiday, and climbed to the top of an eminence to look around it. The bright red colour of the free stone, the size of the building, the formality of its shape, and awkwardness of its position, harmonised as ill with the sweeping Clyde in front, and the bubbling-brook which danced down on the right, as the fat civic form, with bushy wig, gold-headed cane, maroon-coloured coat, and mottled silk stockings, would have accorded with the wild and magnificent scenery of Corehouse Linn.

I went up to the house. It was in that state of desertion which is perhaps the most unpleasant to look on, for the place was going to decay, without having been inhabited. There were about the mansion, though deserted, none of the slow mouldering touches of time, which communicate to buildings, as to the human frame, a sort of reverence, while depriving them of beauty and of strength. The disconcerted schemes of the laird of Castle Treddles had resembled fruit that becomes decayed without ever having ripened. Some windows broken, others patched, others blocked up with deals, gave a disconsolate air to all around, and seemed to say, 'There vanity had purposed to fix her seat, but was anticipated by poverty.'

To the inside, after many a vain summons, I was at length admitted by an old labourer. The house contained every contrivance for luxury and accommodation: the kitchens were a model, and there were hot closets on the office staircase, that the dishes might not cool, as our Scottish phrase goes, between the kitchen and the hall. But instead of the genial smell of good cheer, these temples of Comus emitted the damp odour of sepulchral vaults, and the large cabinets of cast-iron looked like the cages of some feudal bastille. The eating-room and drawing-room, with an interior boudoir, were magnificent apartments, the ceilings fretted and adorned with stucco-work, which already was broken in many places, and looked in others damp and mouldering; the wood panelling was shrunk, and warped, and cracked; the doors, which had not been hung for more than two years, were, nevertheless, already swinging loose from their hinges. Desolation, in short, was where enjoyment had

never been; and the want of all the usual means to preserve was fast performing the work of decay.

The story was a common one, and told in a few words. Mr. Treddles, senior, who bought the estate, was a cautious, money-making person; his son, still embarked in commercial speculations, desired at the same time to enjoy his opulence and to increase it. He incurred great expenses, amongst which this edifice was to be numbered. To support these he speculated boldly and unfortunately; and thus the whole history is told, which may serve for more places than Glentanner.

Strange and various feelings ran through my bosom as I loitered in these deserted apartments, scarce hearing what my guide said to me about the size and destination of each room. The first sentiment, I am ashamed to say, was one of gratified spite. My patrician pride was pleased that the mechanic, who had not thought the house of the Croftangrys sufficiently good for him, had now experienced a fall in his turn. My next thought was as mean, though not so malicious. 'I have had the better of this fellow,' thought I: 'if I lost the estate, I at least spent the price; and Mr. Treddles has lost his among paltry commercial engagements.'

'Wretch!' said the secret voice within, 'darest thou exult in thy shame? Recollect how thy youth and fortune were wasted in those years, and triumph not in the enjoyment of an existence which levelled thee with the beasts that perish. Bethink thee, how this poor man's vanity gave at least bread to the labourer, peasant, and citizen; and his profuse expenditure, like water spilt on the ground, refreshed the lowly herbs and plants where it fell. But thou — whom hast thou enriched, during thy career of extravagance, save those brokers of the devil — vintners, panders, gamblers, and horse-jockeys?' The anguish produced by this self-reproof was so strong, that I put my hand sudden to my forehead, and was obliged to allege a sudden megrim to my attendant, in apology for the action, and a slight groan with which it was accompanied.

I then made an effort to turn my thoughts into a more philosophical current, and muttered half aloud, as a charm to lull any more painful thoughts to rest —

> Nunc ager Umbreni sub nomine, nuper Ofelli
> Dictus erat, nulli proprius; sed cedit in usum
> Nunc mihi, nunc alii. Quocirca vivite fortes,
> Fortiaque adversis opponite pectora rebus.[1]

[1] See Lines from Horace. Note 17.

In my anxiety to fix the philosophical precept in my mind, I recited the last line aloud, which, joined to my previous agitation, I afterwards found became the cause of a report that a mad schoolmaster had come from Edinburgh with the idea in his head of buying Castle Treddles.

As I saw my companion was desirous of getting rid of me, I asked where I was to find the person in whose hands were left the map of the estate and other particulars connected with the sale. The agent who had this in possession, I was told, lived at the town of ——; which, I was informed, and indeed knew well, was distant five miles and a bittock, which may pass in a country where they are less lavish of their land for two or three more. Being somewhat afraid of the fatigue of walking so far, I inquired if a horse or any sort of carriage was to be had, and was answered in the negative.

'But,' said my cicerone, 'you may halt a blink till next morning at the Treddles Arms, a very decent house, scarce a mile off.'

'A new house, I suppose?' replied I.

'Na, it's a new public, but it's an auld house: it was aye the leddy's jointure-house in the Croftangry folks' time; but Mr. Treddles has fitted it up for the convenience of the country. Poor man, he was a public-spirited man, when he had the means.'

'Duntarkin a public-house!' I exclaimed.

'Ay,' said the fellow, surprised at my naming the place by its former title; 'ye'll hae been in this country before, I'm thinking?'

'Long since,' I replied. 'And there is good accommodation at the what-d'ye-call-'em Arms, and a civil landlord?' This I said by way of saying something, for the man stared very hard at me.

'Very decent accommodation. Ye'll no be for fashing wi' wine, I'm thinking, and there's walth o' porter, ale, and a drap gude whisky—(in an undertone) Fairntosh, if you can get on the lee-side of the gudewife, for there is nae gudeman. They ca' her Christie Steele.'

I almost started at the sound. Christie Steele! Christie Steele was my mother's body-servant, her very right hand, and, between ourselves, something like a viceroy over her. I recollected her perfectly well; and though she had, in former times, been no favourite of mine, her name now sounded in my ear like that of a friend, and was the first word I had heard some-

what in unison with the associations around me. I sallied from Castle Treddles, determined to make the best of my way to Duntarkin, and my cicerone hung by me for a little way, giving loose to his love of talking — an opportunity which, situated as he was, the seneschal of a deserted castle, was not likely to occur frequently.

'Some folk think,' said my companion, 'that Mr. Treddles might as weel have put my wife as Christie Steele into the Treddles Arms, for Christie had been aye in service, and never in the public line, and so it 's like she is ganging back in the world, as I hear; now, my wife had keepit a victualling office.'

'That would have been an advantage, certainly,' I replied.

'But I am no sure that I wad ha' looten Eppie take it, if they had put it in her offer.'

'That 's a different consideration.'

'Ony way, I wadna ha' liked to have offended Mr. Treddles; he was a wee toustie when you rubbed him again the hair, but a kind, weel-meaning man.'

I wanted to get rid of this species of chat, and finding myself near the entrance of a footpath which made a short cut to Duntarkin, I put half-a-crown into my guide's hand, bade him good-evening, and plunged into the woods.

'Hout, sir — fie, sir — no from the like of you. Stay, sir, ye wunna find the way that gate. Odd 's mercy, he maun ken the gate as weel as I do mysell. Weel, I wad like to ken wha the chield is.'

Such were the last words of my guide's drowsy, uninteresting tone of voice; and, glad to be rid of him, I strode out stoutly, in despite of large stones, briers, and 'bad steps,' which abounded in the road I had chosen. In the interim, I [illegible] as much as I could, with verses from Horace and Prior, and all who have lauded the mixture of literary with rural life, to call back the visions of last night and this morning, imagining myself settled in some detached farm of the estate of Glentanner,

> Which sloping hills around it close;
> Where many a birch and brown oak grows;

when I should have a cottage with a small library, a small cellar, a spare bed for a friend, and live more happy and more honoured than when I had the whole barony. But the sight of Castle Treddles had disturbed all my own castles in the air.

The realities of the matter, like a stone plashed into a limpid fountain, had destroyed the reflection of the objects around, which, till this act of violence, lay slumbering on the crystal surface, and I tried in vain to re-establish the picture which had been so rudely broken. Well, then, I would try it another way: I would try to get Christie Steele out of her public, since she was not thriving in it, and she who had been my mother's governante should be mine. I knew all her faults, and I told her history over to myself.

She was a grand-daughter, I believe, at least some relative, of the famous Covenanter of the name, whom Dean Swift's friend, Captain Creichton, shot on his own staircase in the times of the persecutions,[1] and had perhaps derived from her native stock much both of its good and evil properties. No one could say of her that she was the life and spirit of the family, though, in my mother's time, she directed all family affairs; her look was austere and gloomy, and when she was not displeased with you, you could only find it out by her silence. If there was cause for complaint, real or imaginary, Christie was loud enough. She loved my mother with the devoted attachment of a younger sister, but she was as jealous of her favour to any one else as if she had been the aged husband of a coquettish wife, and as severe in her reprehensions as an abbess over her nuns. The command which she exercised over her was that, I fear, of a strong and determined over a feeble and more nervous disposition; and though it was used with rigour, yet, to the best of Christie Steele's belief, she was urging her mistress to her best and most becoming course, and would have died rather than have recommended any other. The attachment of this woman was limited to the family of Croftangry, for she had few relations; and a dissolute cousin, whom late in life she had taken as a husband, had long left her a widow.

To me she had ever a strong dislike. Even from my early childhood she was jealous, strange as it may seem, of my interest in my mother's affections; she saw my foibles and vices with abhorrence, and without a grain of allowance; nor did she pardon the weakness of maternal affection, even when, by the death of two brothers, I came to be the only child of a widowed parent. At the time my disorderly conduct induced my mother to leave Glentanner and retreat to her jointure-house, I always blamed Christie Steele for having influenced

[1] See Steele, the Covenanter. Note 18.

her resentment, and prevented her from listening to my vows of amendment, which at times were real and serious, and might, perhaps, have accelerated that change of disposition which has since, I trust, taken place. But Christie regarded me as altogether a doomed and predestinated child of perdition, who was sure to hold on my course, and drag downwards whosoever might attempt to afford me support.

Still, though I knew such had been Christie's prejudices against me in other days, yet I thought enough of time had since passed away to destroy all of them. I knew, that when, through the disorder of my affairs, my mother underwent some temporary inconvenience about money matters, Christie, as a thing of course, stood in the gap, and having sold a small inheritance which had descended to her, brought the purchase-money to her mistress, with a sense of devotion as deep as that which inspired the Christians of the first age, when they sold all they had and followed the apostles of the church. I therefore thought that we might, in old Scottish phrase, 'let byeganes be byeganes,' and begin upon a new account. Yet I resolved, like a skilful general, to reconnoitre a little before laying down any precise scheme of proceeding, and in the interim I determined to preserve my incognito.

CHAPTER IV

Mr. Croftangry Bids Adieu to Clydesdale

> Alas, how changed from what it once had been!
> 'T was now degraded to a common inn.
>
> GAY.

AN hour's brisk walking, or thereabouts, placed me in front of Duntarkin, which had also, I found, undergone considerable alterations, though it had not been altogether demolished like the principal mansion. An inn-yard extended before the door of the decent little jointure-house, even amidst the remnants of the holly hedges which had screened the lady's garden. Then a broad, raw-looking, new-made road intruded itself up the little glen, instead of the old horseway, so seldom used that it was almost entirely covered with grass. It is a great enormity of which gentlemen trustees on the highways are sometimes guilty, in adopting the breadth necessary for an avenue to the metropolis, where all that is required is an access to some sequestered and unpopulous district. I do not say anything of the expense, that the trustees and their constituents may settle as they please. But the destruction of silvan beauty is great, when the breadth of the road is more than proportioned to the vale through which it runs, and lowers of course the consequence of any objects of wood or water, or broken and varied ground, which might otherwise attract notice and give pleasure. A bubbling runnel by the side of one of those modern Appian or Flaminian highways is but like a kennel, the little hill is diminished to a hillock, the romantic hillock to a mole-hill, almost too small for sight.

Such an enormity, however, had destroyed the quiet loneliness of Duntarkin,[1] and intruded its breadth of dust and gravel, and its associations of 'pochays' and mail-coaches, upon one of the most sequestered spots in the Middle Ward of Clydesdale.

[1] Mr. Lockhart informs us that this demesne is sketched from that of Carmichael, the ancient mansion of the noble family of Hyndford (*Laing*).

The house was old and dilapidated, and looked sorry for itself, as if sensible of a derogation; but the sign was strong and new, and brightly painted, displaying a heraldic shield, three shuttles in a field diapré, a web partly unfolded for crest, and two stout giants for supporters, each one holding a weaver's beam proper. To have displayed this monstrous emblem on the front of the house might have hazarded bringing down the wall, but for certain would have blocked up one or two windows. It was therefore established independent of the mansion, being displayed in an iron framework, and suspended upon two posts, with as much wood and iron about it as would have builded a brig; and there it hung, creaking, groaning, and screaming in every blast of wind, and frightening for five miles' distance, for aught I knew, the nests of thrushes and linnets, the ancient denizens of the little glen.

When I entered the place, I was received by Christie Steele herself, who seemed uncertain whether to drop me in the kitchen or usher me into a separate apartment. As I called for tea, with something rather more substantial than bread and butter, and spoke of supping and sleeping, Christie at last inducted me into the room where she herself had been sitting, probably the only one which had a fire, though the month was October. This answered my plan; and, as she was about to remove her spinning-wheel, I begged she would have the goodness to remain and make my tea, adding, that I liked the sound of the wheel, and desired not to disturb her housewife-thrift in the least.

'I dinna ken, sir,' she replied, in a dry *revêche* tone, which carried me back twenty years, 'I am nane of thae heartsome landleddies that can tell country cracks, and make themsells agreeable; and I was ganging to pit on a fire for you in the Red Room; but if it is your will to stay here, he that pays the lawing maun choose the lodging.'

I endeavoured to engage her in conversation; but, though she answered with a kind of stiff civility, I could get her into no freedom of discourse, and she began to look at her wheel and at the door more than once, as if she meditated a retreat. I was obliged, therefore, to proceed to some special questions that might have interest for a person whose ideas were probably of a very bounded description.

I looked round the apartment, being the same in which I had last seen my poor mother. The author of the family history, formerly mentioned, had taken great credit to himself

for the improvements he had made in this same jointure-house of Duntarkin, and how, upon his marriage, when his mother took possession of the same as her jointure-house, 'to his great charges and expenses he caused box the walls of the great parlour (in which I was now sitting), empanel the same, and plaster the roof, finishing the apartment with ane concave chimney, and decorating the same with pictures, and a barometer and thermometer.' And in particular, which his good mother used to say she prized above all the rest, he had caused his own portraiture be limned over the mantelpiece by a skilful hand. And, in good faith, there he remained still, having much the visage which I was disposed to ascribe to him on the evidence of his handwriting — grim and austere, yet not without a cast of shrewdness and determination; in armour, though he never wore it, I fancy; one hand on an open book, and one resting on the hilt of his sword, though I daresay his head never ached with reading nor his limbs with fencing.

'That picture is painted on the wood, madam,' I said.

'Ay, sir, or it's like it would not have been left there. They took a' they could.'

'Mr. Treddles's creditors, you mean?' I said.

'Na,' replied she, drily, 'the creditors of another family, that sweepit cleaner than this poor man's, because I fancy there was less to gather.'

'An older family, perhaps, and probably more remembered and regretted than later possessors?'

Christie here settled herself in her seat, and pulled her wheel towards her. I had given her something interesting for her thoughts to dwell upon, and her wheel was a mechanical accompaniment on such occasions, the revolutions of which assisted her in the explanation of her ideas.

'Mair regretted — mair missed! I liked ane of the auld family very weel, but I winna say that for them a'. How should they be mair missed than the Treddleses? The cotton mill was such a thing for the country! The mair bairns a cottar body had the better: they would make their awn keep frae the time they were five years auld; and a widow wi' three or four bairns was a wealthy woman in the time of the Treddleses.'

'But the health of these poor children, my good friend — their education and religious instruction ——'

'For health,' said Christie, looking gloomily at me, 'ye maun ken little of the warld, sir, if ye dinna ken that the health

of the poor man's body, as weel as his youth and his strength, are all at the command of the rich man's purse. There never was a trade so unhealthy yet, but men would fight to get wark at it for twa pennies a day aboon the common wage. But the bairns were reasonably weel cared for in the way of air and exercise, and a very responsible youth heard them their carritch, and gied them lessons in Reediemadeasy.[1] Now, what did they ever get before? Maybe on a winter day they wad be called out to beat the wood for cocks or sic-like, and then the starving weans would maybe get a bite of broken bread, and maybe no, just as the butler was in humour — that was a' they got.'

'They were not, then, a very kind family to the poor, these old possessors?' said I, somewhat bitterly; for I had expected to hear my ancestors' praises recorded, though I certainly despaired of being regaled with my own.

'They werena ill to them, sir, and that is aye something. They were just decent bien bodies: ony poor creature that had face to beg got an awmous and welcome; they that were shamefaced gaed by, and twice as welcome. But they keepit an honest walk before God and man, the Croftangrys, and, as I said before, if they did little good, they did as little ill. They lifted their rents and spent them, called in their kain and eat them, gaed to the kirk of a Sunday, bowed civilly if folk took aff their bannets as they gaed by, and lookit as black as sin at them that keepit them on.'

'These are their arms that you have on the sign?'

'What! on the painted board that is skirling and groaning at the door? Na, these are Mr. Treddles's arms, though they look as like legs as arms; ill-pleased I was at the fule thing, that cost as muckle as would hae repaired the house from the wa' stane to the rigging-tree. But if I am to bide here, I'll hae a decent board wi' a punch-bowl on it.'

'Is there a doubt of your staying here, Mrs. Steele?'

'Dinna mistress me,' said the cross old woman, whose fingers were now plying their thrift in a manner which indicated nervous irritation: 'there was nae luck in the land since Luckie turned Mistress, and Mistress my Leddy; and as for staying here, if it concerns you to ken, I may stay if I can pay a hundred pund sterling for the lease, and I may flit if I canna, and so gude-e'en to you, Christie,' and round went the wheel with much activity.

[1] 'Reading made Easy,' usually so pronounced in Scotland.

'And you like the trade of keeping a public-house?'

'I can scarce say that,' she replied. 'But worthy Mr. Prendergast is clear of its lawfulness, and I hae gotten used to it, and made a decent living, though I never make out a fause reckoning, or give ony ane the means to disorder reason in my house.'

'Indeed?' said I; 'in that case, there is no wonder you have not made up the hundred pounds to purchase the lease.'

'How do you ken,' said she, sharply, 'that I might not have had a hundred punds of my ain fee? If I have it not, I am sure it is my ain faut; and I wunna ca' it faut neither, for it gaed to her wha was weel entitled to a' my service.' Again she pulled stoutly at the flax, and the wheel went smartly round.

'This old gentleman,' said I, fixing my eye on the painted panel, 'seems to have had *his* arms painted as well as Mr. Treddles — that is, if that painting in the corner be a scutcheon.'

'Ay — ay, cushion, just sae, they maun a' hae their cushions: there 's sma' gentry without that; and so the arms, as they ca' them, of the house of Glentanner may be seen on an auld stane in the west end of the house. But to do them justice, they didna propale sae muckle about them as poor Mr. Treddles did; it 's like they were better used to them.'

'Very likely. Are there any of the old family in life, goodwife?'

'No,' she replied; then added, after a moment's hesitation — 'not that I know of,' and the wheel, which had intermitted, began again to revolve.

'Gone abroad, perhaps?' I suggested.

She now looked up and faced me. 'No, sir. There were three sons of the last laird of Glentanner, as he was then called: John and William were hopeful young gentlemen, but they died early — one of a decline, brought on by the mizzles, the other lost his life in a fever. It would hae been lucky for mony ane that Chrystal had gane the same gate.'

'Ch! he must have been the young spendthrift that sold the property? Well, but you should not have such an ill-will against him: remember necessity has no law; and then, goodwife, he was not more culpable than Mr. Treddles, whom you are so sorry for.'

'I wish I could think sae, sir, for his mother's sake; but Mr. Treddles was in trade, and though he had no preceese right to do so, yet there was some warrant for a man being expensive

that imagined he was making a mint of mone But this unhappy lad devoured his patrimony, when he ke d that he was living like a ratten in a Dunlap cheese, and minishing his means at a' hands. I canna bide to think on 't.' With this she broke out into a snatch of a ballad; but little of mirth was there either in the tone or the expression: —

'For he did spend, and make an end
Of gear that his forefathers wan;
Of land and ware he made him bare,
So speak nae mair of the auld gudeman.'

'Come, dame,' said I, 'it is a long lane that has no turning. I will not keep from you that I have heard something of this poor fellow, Chrystal Croftangry. He has sown his wild oats, as they say, and has settled into a steady respectable man.'

'And wha tell'd ye that tidings?' said she, looking sharply at me.

'Not perhaps the best judge in the world of his character, for it was himself, dame.'

'And if he tell'd you truth, it was a virtue he did not aye use to practise,' said Christie.

'The devil!' said I, considerably nettled; 'all the world held him to be a man of honour.'

'Ay — ay! he would hae shot onybody wi' his pistols and his guns that had evened him to be a liar. But if he promised to pay an honest tradesman the next term-day, did he keep his word then? And if he promised a puir silly lass to make gude her shame, did he speak truth then? And what is that but being a liar, and a black-hearted deceitful liar to boot?'

My indignation was rising, but I strove to suppress it; indeed, I should only have afforded my tormentor a triumph by an angry reply. I partly suspected she began to recognise me; yet she testified so little emotion, that I could not think my suspicion well founded. I went on, therefore, to say, in a tone as indifferent as I could command, 'Well, goodwife, I see you will believe no good of this Chrystal of yours till he comes back and buys a good farm on the estate, and makes you his housekeeper.'

The old woman dropped her thread, folded her hands, as she looked up to heaven with a face of apprehension. 'The Lord,' she exclaimed, 'forbid! The Lord in His mercy forbid! Oh, sir! if you really know this unlucky man, persuade him

to settle where folk ken the good that you say he has come to, and dinna ken the evil of his former days. He used to be proud enough — O dinna let him come here, even for his own sake. He used ance to have some pride.'

Here she once more drew the wheel close to her, and began to pull at the flax with both hands. 'Dinna let him come here, to be looked down upon by ony that may be left of his auld reiving companions, and to see the decent folk that he looked over his nose at look over their noses at him, baith at kirk and market. Dinna let him come to his ain country to be made a tale about when ony neighbour points him out to another, and tells what he is, and what he was, and how he wrecked a dainty estate, and brought harlots to the door-cheek of his father's house, till he made it nae residence for his mother; and how it had been foretauld by a servant of his ain house that he was a ne'er-do-weel, and a child of perdition, and . w her words were made good, and ——'

'Stop there, goodwife, if you please,' said I; 'you have said as much as I can well remember, and more than it may be safe to repeat. I can use a great deal of freedom with the gentleman we speak of; but I think, were any other person to carry him half of your message, I would scarce ensure his personal safety. And now, as I see the night is settled to be a fine one, I will walk on to – —, where I must meet a coach to-morrow, as it passes to Edinburgh.'

So saying, I paid my moderate reckoning, and took my leave, without being able to discover whether the prejudiced and hard-hearted old woman did, or did not, suspect the identity of her guest with the Chrystal Croftangry against whom she harboured so much dislike.

The night was fine and frosty, though, when I pretended to see what its character was, it might have rained like the deluge. I only made the excuse to escape from old Christie Steele. The horses which run races in the Corso at Rome without any riders, in order to stimulate their exertion, carry each his own spurs, namely, small balls of steel, with sharp projecting spikes, which are attached to loose straps of leather, and, flying about in the violence of the agitation, keep the horse to his speed by pricking him as they strike against his flanks. The old woman's reproaches had the same effect on me, and urged me to a rapid pace, as if it had been possible to escape from my own recollections. In the best days of my life, when I won one or two hard walking-matches, I doubt if I ever walked so fast as I did

betwixt the Treddles Arms and the borough town for which I was bound. Though the night was cold, I was warm enough by the time I got to my inn; and it required a refreshing draught of porter, with half an hour's repose, ere I could determine to give no farther thought to Christie and her opinions than those of any other vulgar, prejudiced old woman. I resolved at last to treat the thing *en bagatelle*, and, calling for writing-materials, I folded up a cheque for £100, with these lines on the envelope:

'Chrystal, the ne'er-do-weel,
Child destined to the deil,
Sends this to Christie Steele.'

And I was so much pleased with this new mode of viewing the subject, that I regretted the lateness of the hour prevented my finding a person to carry the letter express to its destination.

But with the morning cool reflection came.

I considered that the money, and probably more, was actually due by me on my mother's account to Christie, who had lent it in a moment of great necessity, and that the returning it in a light or ludicrous manner was not unlikely to prevent so touchy and punctilious a person from accepting a debt which was most justly her due, and which it became me particularly to see satisfied. Sacrificing, then, my triad with little regret, for it looked better by candlelight, and through the medium of a pot of porter, than it did by daylight, and with bohea for a menstruum, I determined to employ Mr. Fairscribe's mediation in buying up the lease of the little inn, and conferring it upon Christie in the way which should make it most acceptable to her feelings. It is only necessary to add, that my plan succeeded, and that Widow Steele even yet keeps the Treddles Arms. Do not say, therefore, that I have been disingenuous with you, reader; since, if I have not told all the ill of myself I might have done, I have indicated to you a person able and willing to supply the blank, by relating all my delinquencies, as well as my misfortunes.

In the meantime, I totally abandoned the idea of redeeming any part of my paternal property, and resolved to take Christie Steele's advice, as young Norval does Glenalvon's, 'although it sounded harshly.'

CHAPTER V

Mr. Croftangry Settles in the Canongate

If you will know my house,
'T is at the tuft of olives here hard by.
As You Like It.

BY a revolution of humour which I am unable to account for, I changed my mind entirely on my plans of life, in consequence of the disappointment the history of which fills the last chapter. I began to discover that the country would not at all suit me; for I had relinquished field-sports, and felt no inclination whatever to farming, the ordinary vocation of country gentlemen; besides that, I had no talent for assisting either candidate in case of an expected election, and saw no amusement in the duties of a road trustee, a commissioner of supply, or even in the magisterial functions of the bench. I had begun to take some taste for reading; and a domiciliation in the country must remove me from the use of books, excepting the small subscription library, in which the very book which you want is uniformly sure to be engaged.

I resolved, therefore, to make the Scottish metropolis my regular resting-place, reserving to myself to take occasionally those excursions which, spite of all I have said against mail-coaches, Mr. Piper has rendered so easy. Friend of our life and of our leisure, he secures by despatch against loss of time, and by the best of coaches, cattle, and steadiest of drivers against hazard of limb, and wafts us, as well as our letters, from Edinburgh to Cape Wrath in the penning of a paragraph.

When my mind was quite made up to make Auld Reekie my headquarters, reserving the privilege of exploring in all directions, I began to explore in good earnest for the purpose of discovering a suitable habitation. 'And whare trew ye I gaed?' as Sir Pertinax says. Not to George's Square, nor to Charlotte Square, nor to the old New Town, nor to the new New Town,

nor to the Calton Hill — I went to the Canongate, and to the very portion of the Canongate in which I had formerly been immured, like the errant knight, prisoner in some enchanted castle, where spells have made the ambient air impervious to the unhappy captive, although the organs of sight encountered no obstacle to his free passage.

Why I should have thought of pitching my tent here I cannot tell. Perhaps it was to enjoy the pleasures of freedom, where I had so long endured the bitterness of restraint; on the principle of the officer who, after he had retired from the army, ordered his servant to continue to call him at the hour of parade, simply that he might have the pleasure of saying — 'D—n the parade!' and turning to the other side to enjoy his slumbers. Or perhaps I expected to find in the vicinity some little old-fashioned house, having somewhat of the *rus in urbe* which I was ambitious of enjoying. Enough, I went, as aforesaid, to the Canongate.

I stood by the kennel, of which I have formerly spoken, and, my mind being at ease, my bodily organs were more delicate. I was more sensible than heretofore that, like the trade of Pompey in *Measure for Measure*, it did in some sort —— 'pah, an ounce of civet, good apothecary!' Turning from thence, my steps naturally directed themselves to my own humble apartment, where my little Highland landlady, as dapper and as tight as ever (for old women wear a hundred times better than the hard-wrought seniors of the masculine sex), stood at the door, 'teedling' to herself a Highland song as she shook a table-napkin over the fore-stair, and then proceeded to fold it up neatly for future service.

'How do you, Janet?'

'Thank ye, good sir,' answered my old friend, without looking at me; 'but ye might as weel say Mrs. MacEvoy, for she is na a'body's Shanet — umph.'

'You must be *my* Janet, though, for all that. Have you forgot me? Do you not remember Chrystal Croftangry?'

The light, kind-hearted creature threw her napkin into the open door, skipped down the stair like a fairy, three steps at once, seized me by the hands — both hands — jumped up, and actually kissed me. I was a little ashamed; but what swain, of somewhere inclining to sixty, could resist the advances of a fair contemporary? So we allowed the full degree of kindness to the meeting — *honi soit qui mal y pense* — and then Janet entered instantly upon business. 'An' ye 'll gae in, man, and

see your auld lodgings, nae doubt, and Shanet will pay ye the fifteen shillings of change that ye ran away without, and without bidding Shanet good day. But never mind (nodding good humouredly), Shanet saw you were carried for the time.'

By this time we were in my old quarters, and Janet, with her bottle of cordial in one hand and the glass in the other, had forced on me a dram of usquebaugh, distilled with saffron and other herbs, after some old-fashioned Highland receipt. Then was unfolded, out of many a little scrap of paper, the reserved sum of fifteen shillings, which Janet had treasured for twenty years and upwards.

'Here they are,' she said, in honest triumph, 'just the same I was holding out to ye when ye ran as if ye had been fey. Shanet has had siller, and Shanet has wanted siller, mony a time since that; and the gauger has come, and the factor has come, and the butcher and baker — Cot bless us! — just like to tear poor auld Shanet to pieces, but she took good care of Mr. Croftangry's fifteen shillings.'

'But what if I had never come back, Janet?'

'Och, if Shanet had heard you were dead, she would hae gien it to the poor of the chapel, to pray for Mr. Croftangry,' said Janet, crossing herself, for she was a Catholic. 'You maybe do not think it would do you cood, but the blessing of the poor can never do no harm.'

I agreed heartily in Janet's conclusion; and, as to have desired her to consider the board as her own property would have been an indelicate return to her for the uprightness of her conduct, I requested her to dispose of it as she had proposed to do in the event of my death — that is, if she knew any poor people of merit to whom it might be useful.

'Ower mony of them,' raising the corner of her checked apron to her eyes — 'e'en ower mony of them, Mr. Croftangry. Och, ay, there is the puir Highland creatures frae Glenshee, that c- down for the harvest, and are lying wi' the fever — five shillings to them; and half-a-crown to Bessie MacEvoy, whose coodman, puir creature, died of the frost, being a shairman, for a' the whisky he could drink to keep it out o' his stamoch; and ——'

But she suddenly interrupted the bead-roll of her proposed charities, and assuming a very sage look, and primming up her little chattering mouth, she went on in a different tone — 'But, och, Mr. Croftangry, bethink ye whether ye will not need a' this siller yoursell, and maybe look back and think lang for

ha'en kiven it away, whilk is a great sin to forthink a wark o' charity, and also is unlucky, and moreover is not the thought of a shentleman's son like yoursell, dear. And I say this, that ye may think a bit, for your mother's son kens that ye are no so careful as you should be of the gear, and I hae tauld ye of it before, jewel.'

I assured her I could easily spare the money, without risk of future repentance; and she went on to infer that, in such a case, 'Mr. Croftangry had grown a rich man in foreign parts, and was free of his troubles with messengers and sheriff-officers, and sic-like scum of the earth; and Shanet MacEvoy's mother's daughter be a blythe woman to hear it. But if Mr. Croftangry was in trouble, there was his room, and his bed, and Shanet to wait on him, and tak payment when it was quite convenient.'

I explained to Janet my situation, in which she expressed unqualified delight. I then proceeded to inquire into her own circumstances, and, though she spoke cheerfully and contentedly, I could see they were precarious. I had paid more than was due; other lodgers fell into an opposite error, and forgot to pay Janet at all. Then, Janet being ignorant of all indirect modes of screwing money out of her lodgers, others in the same line of life, who were sharper than the poor simple Highlandwoman, were enabled to let their apartments cheaper in appearance, though the inmates usually found them twice as dear in the long-run.

As I had already destined my old landlady to be my housekeeper and governante, knowing her honesty, good-nature, and, although a Scotchwoman, her cleanliness and excellent temper, saving the short and hasty expressions of anger which Highlanders call a 'fuff,' I now proposed the plan to her in such a way as was likely to make it most acceptable. Very acceptable as the proposal was, as I could plainly see, Janet, however, took a day to consider upon it; and her reflections against our next meeting had suggested only one objection, which was singular enough.

'My honour,' so she now termed me, 'would pe for biding in some fine street apout the town; now Shanet wad ill like to live in a place where polish, and sheriffs, and bailiffs, and sic thieves and trash of the world, could tak puir shentlemen by the throat, just because they wanted a wheen dollars in the sporran. She had lived in the bonny glen of Tomanthoulick — Cot, an ony of the vermint had come there, her father wad hae

wared a shot on them, and he could hit a buck within as mony measured yards as e'er a man of his clan. And the place here was so quiet frae them, they durst na put their nose ower the gutter. Shanet owed nobody a boddle, put she couldna pide to see honest folk and pretty shentlemen forced away to prison whether they would or no; and then if Shanet was to lay her tangs ower ane of the ragamuffins' heads, it would be, maybe, that the law would gie 't a hard name.'

One thing I have learned in life — never to speak sense when nonsense will answer the purpose as well. I should have had great difficulty to convince this practical and disinterested admirer and vindicator of liberty that arrests seldom or never were to be seen in the streets of Edinburgh, and to satisfy her of their justice and necessity would have been as difficult as to convert her to the Protestant faith. I therefore assured her, my intention, if I could get a suitable habitation, was to remain in the quarter where she at present dwelt. Janet gave three skips on the floor, and uttered as many short, shrill yells of joy; yet doubt almost instantly returned, and she insisted on knowing what possible reason I could have for making my residence where few lived, save those whose misfortunes drove them thither. It occurred to me to answer her by recounting the legend of the rise of my family, and of our deriving our name from a particular place near Holyrood Palace. This, which would have appeared to most people a very absurd reason for choosing a residence, was entirely satisfactory to Janet MacEvoy.

'Och, . ae doubt! if it was the land of her fathers, there was nae mair to be said. Put it was queer that her family estate should just lie at the town tail, and covered with houses, where the king's cows, Cot bless them hide and horn! used to craze upon. It was strange changes.' She mused a little, and then added, 'Put it is something better wi' Croftangry when the changes is frae the field to the habited place, and not from the place of habitation to the desert; for Shanet, her nainsell, kent a glen where there were men as weel as there may be in Croftangry, and if there werena altogether sae mony of them, they were as good men in their tartan as the others in their broadcloth. And there were houses too, and if they were not biggit with stane and lime, and lofted like the houses at Croftangry, yet they served the purpose of them that lived there; and mony a braw bonnet, and mony a silk snood, and comely white

curch would come out to gang to kirk or chapel on the Lord's day, and little bairns toddling after; and now — och, och, ohellany, ohonari! the glen is desolate, and the braw snoods and bonnets are gane, and the Saxon's house stands dull and lonely, like the single bare-breasted rock that the falcon builds on — the falcon that drives the heath-bird frae the glen.'

Janet, like many Highlanders, was full of imagination; and, when melancholy themes came upon her, expressed herself almost poetically, owing to the genius of the Celtic language in which she thought, and in which, doubtless, she would have spoken, had I understood Gaelic. In two minutes the shade of gloom and regret had passed from her good-humoured features, and she was again the little busy, prating, important old woman, undisputed owner of one flat of a small tenement in the Abbey Yard, and about to be promoted to be housekeeper to an elderly bachelor gentleman, Chrystal Croftangry, Esq.

It was not long before Janet's local researches found out exactly the sort of place I wanted, and there we settled. Janet was afraid I would not be satisfied, because it is not exactly part of Croftangry; but I stopped her doubts, by assuring her it had been part and pendicle thereof in my forefathers' time, which passed very well.

I do not intend to possess any one with an exact knowledge of my lodging; though, as Bobadil says, 'I care not who knows it, since the cabin is convenient.' But I may state in general, that it is a house 'within itself,' or, according to a newer phraseology in advertisements, 'self-contained,' has a garden of near half an acre, and a patch of ground with trees in front. It boasts five rooms and servants' apartments, looks in front upon the palace, and from behind towards the hill and crags of the King's Park. Fortunately the place had a name, which, with a little improvement, served to countenance the legend which I had imposed on Janet, and would not perhaps have been sorry if I had been able to impose on myself. It was called Littlecroft; we have dubbed it Little Croftangry, and the men of letters belonging to the Post-Office have sanctioned the change, and deliver letters so addressed. Thus I am to all intents and purposes Chrystal Croftangry of that Ilk.

My establishment consists of Janet, an under maid-servant, and a Highland wench for Janet to exercise her Gaelic upon, with a handy lad who can lay the cloth, and take care

besides of a pony, on which I find my way to Portobello sands, especially when the cavalry have a drill; for, like an old fool as I am, I have not altogether become indifferent to the tramp of horses and the flash of weapons, of which, though no professional soldier, it has been my fate to see something in my youth. For wet mornings, I have my book; is it fine weather, I visit, or I wander on the Crags, as the humour dictates. My dinner is indeed solitary, yet not quite so neither; for, though Andrew waits, Janet, or — as she is to all the world but her master and certain old Highland gossips — Mrs. MacEvoy, attends, bustles about, and desires to see everything is in first-rate order, and to tell me, Cot pless us, the wonderful news of the palace for the day. When the cloth is removed, and I light my cigar, and begin to husband a pint of port, or a glass of old whisky and water, it is the rule of the house that Janet takes a chair at some distance, and nods or works her stocking, as she may be disposed; ready to speak if I am in the talking humour, and sitting quiet as a mouse if I am rather inclined to study a book or the newspaper. At six precisely she makes my tea, and leaves me to drink it; and then occurs an interval of time which most old bachelors find heavy on their hands. The theatre is a good occasional resource, especially if Will Murray acts, or a bright star of eminence shines forth; but it is distant, and so are one or two public societies to which I belong; besides, these evening walks are all incompatible with the elbow-chair feeling, which desires some employment that may divert the mind without fatiguing the body.

Under the influence of these impressions, I have sometimes thought of this literary undertaking. I must have been the Bonassus himself to have mistaken myself for a genius, yet I have leisure and reflections like my neighbours. I am a borderer also between two generations, and can point out more perhaps than others of those fading traces of antiquity which are daily vanishing; and I know many a modern instance and many an old tradition, and therefore I ask —

> What ails me, I may not, as well as they,
> Rake up some threadbare tales, that mouldering lay
> In chimney corners, wont by Christmas fires
> To read and rock to sleep our ancient sires?
> No man his threshold better knows than I
> Brute's first arrival and first victory,
> St. George's sorrel and his cross of blood,
> Arthur's round board and Caledonian wood.

No shop is so easily set up as an antiquary's. Like those of the lowest order of pawnbrokers, a commodity of rusty iron, a bag or two of hobnails, a few odd shoe-buckles, cashiered kail-pots, and fire-irons declared incapable of service are quite sufficient to set him up. If he add a sheaf or two of penny ballads and broadsides, he is a great man — an extensive trader. And then, like the pawnbrokers aforesaid, if the author understands a little legerdemain, he may, by dint of a little picking and stealing, make the inside of his shop a great deal richer than the out, and be able to show you things which cause those who do not understand the antiquarian trick of clean conveyance to wonder how the devil he came by them.

It may be said, that antiquarian articles interest but few customers, and that we may bawl ourselves as rusty as the wares we deal in without any one asking the price of our merchandise. But I do not rest my hopes upon this department of my labours only. I propose also to have a corresponding shop for sentiment, and dialogues, and disquisition, which may captivate the fancy of those who have no relish, as the established phrase goes, for pure antiquity — a sort of greengrocer's stall erected in front of my ironmongery wares, garlanding the rusty memorials of ancient times with cresses, cabbages, leeks, and water-purpie.

As I have some idea that I am writing too well to be understood, I humble myself to ordinary language, and aver, with becoming modesty, that I do think myself capable of sustaining a publication of a miscellaneous nature, as like to *The Spectator* or *The Guardian*, *The Mirror* or *The Lounger*, as my poor abilities may be able to accomplish. Not that I have any purpose of imitating Johnson, whose general learning and power of expression I do not deny, but many of whose *Ramblers* are little better than a sort of pageant, where trite and obvious maxims are made to swagger in lofty and mystic language and get some credit only because they are not easily understood. There are some of the great moralist's papers which I cannot peruse without thinking on a second-rate masquerade, where the best-known and least-esteemed characters in town march in as heroes, and sultans, and so forth, and, by dint of tawdry dresses, get some consideration until they are found out. It is not, however, prudent to commence with throwing stones, just when I am striking out windows of my own.

I think even the local situation of Little Croftangry may be considered as favourable to my undertaking. A nobler contrast

there can hardly exist than that of the huge city, dark with the smoke of ages, and groaning with the various sounds of active industry or idle revel, and the lofty and craggy hill, silent and solitary as the grave; one exhibiting the full tide of existence, pressing and precipitating itself forward with the force of an inundation; the other resembling some time-worn anchorite, whose life passes as silent and unobserved as the slender rill which escapes unheard, and scarce seen, from the fountain of his patron saint. The city resembles the busy temple, where the modern Comus and Mammon hold their court, and thousands sacrifice ease, independence, and virtue itself at their shrine; the misty and lonely mountain seems as a throne to the majestic but terrible genius of feudal times, when the same divinities dispensed coronets and domains to those who had heads to devise and arms to execute bold enterprises.

I have, as it were, the two extremities of the moral world at my threshold. From the front door, a few minutes' walk brings me into the heart of a wealthy and populous city; as many paces from my opposite entrance place me in a solitude as complete as Zimmermann could have desired. Surely, with such aids to my imagination, I may write better than if I were in a lodging in the New Town or a garret in the old. As the Spaniard says, '*Viamos, caracco!*'

I have not chosen to publish periodically, my reason for which was twofold. In the first place, I don't like to be hurried, and have had enough of duns in an early part of my life to make me reluctant to hear of or see one, even in the less awful shape of a printer's devil. But, secondly, a periodical paper is not easily extended in circulation beyond the quarter in which it is published. This work, if published in fugitive numbers, would scarce, without a high pressure on the part of the bookseller, be raised above the Netherbow, and never could be expected to ascend to the level of Princes Street. Now I am ambitious that my compositions, though having their origin in this valley of Holyrood, should not only be extended into those exalted regions I have mentioned, but also that they should cross the Forth, astonish the long town of Kirkcaldy, enchant the skippers and colliers of the east of Fife, venture even into the classic arcades of St. Andrews, and travel as much farther to the north as the breath of applause will carry their sails. As for a southward direction, it is not to be hoped for in my fondest dreams. I am informed that Scottish litera-

ture, like Scottish whisky, will be presently laid under a prohibitory duty. But enough of this. If any reader is dull enough not to comprehend the advantages which, in point of circulation, a compact book has over a collection of fugitive numbers, let him try the range of a gun loaded with hail-shot, against that of the same piece charged with an equal weight of lead consolidated in a single bullet.

Besides, it was of less consequence that I shou'd have published periodically, since I did not mean to solicit or accept of the contributions of friends, or the criticisms of those who may be less kindly disposed. Notwithstanding the excellent examples which might be quoted, I will establish no begging-box, either under the name of a lion's-head or an ass's. What is good or ill shall be mine own, or the contribution of friends to whom I may have private access. Many of my voluntary assistants might be cleverer than myself, and then I should have a brilliant article appear among my chiller effusions, like a patch of lace on a Scottish cloak of Galashiels grey. Some might be worse, and then I must reject them, to the injury of the feelings of the writer, or else insert them, to make my own darkness yet more opaque and palpable. 'Let every herring,' says our old-fashioned proverb, 'hang by his own head.'

One person, however, I may distinguish, as she is now no more, who, living to the utmos. term of human life, honoured me with a great share of her friendship, as indeed we were blood-relatives in the Scottish sense — Heaven knows how many degrees removed — and friends in the sense of Old England. I mean the late excellent and regretted Mrs. Bethune Baliol. But as I design this admirable picture of the olden time for a principal character in my work, I will only say here, that she knew and approved of my present purpose; and though she declined to contribute to it while she lived, from a sense of dignified retirement, which she thought became her age, sex, and condition in life, she left me some materials for carrying on my proposed work, which I coveted when I heard her detail them in conversation, and which now, when I have their substance in her own handwriting, I account far more valuable than anything I have myself to offer. I hope the mentioning her name in conjunction with my own will give no offence to any of her numerous friends, as it was her own express pleasure that I should employ the manuscripts, which she did me the honour to bequeath me, in the manner in which I have now used them. It must be added, however, that in most cases I

have disguised names, and in some have added shading and colouring to bring out the narrative.

Much of my materials, besides these, are derived from friends, living or dead. The accuracy of some of these may be doubtful, in which case I shall be happy to receive, from sufficient authority, the correction of the errors which must creep into traditional documents. The object of the whole publication is, to throw some light on the manners of Scotland as they were, and to contrast them, occasionally, with those of the present day. My own opinions are in favour of our own times in many respects, but not in so far as affords means for exercising the imagination, or exciting the interest which attaches to other times. I am glad to be a writer or a reader in 1826, but I would be most interested in reading or relating what happened from half a century to a century before. We have the best of it. Scenes in which our ancestors thought deeply, acted fiercely, and died desperately are to us tales to divert the tedium of a winter's evening, when we are engaged to no party, or beguile a summer's morning, when it is too scorching to ride or walk.

Yet I do not mean that my essays and narratives should be limited to Scotland. I pledge myself to no particular line of subjects; but, on the contrary, say with Burns,

> Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
> Perhaps turn out a sermon.

I have only to add, by way of postscript to these preliminary chapters, that I have had recourse to Molière's recipe, and read my manuscript over to my old woman, Janet MacEvoy.

The dignity of being consulted delighted Janet; and Wilkie or Allan would have made a capital sketch of her, as she sat upright in her chair, instead of her ordinary lounging posture, knitting her stocking systematically, as if she meant every twist of her thread and inclination of the wires to bear burden to the cadence of my voice. I am afraid, too, that I myself felt more delight than I ought to have done in my own composition, and read a little more oratorically than I should have ventured to do before an auditor of whose applause I was not so secure. And the result did not entirely encourage my plan of censorship. Janet did indeed seriously incline to the account of my previous life, and bestowed some Highland maledictions more emphatic than courteous on Christie Steele's reception of a 'shentlemans in distress,' and of her own mistress's house too. I omitted for certain reasons, or greatly abridged,

what related to herself. But when I came to treat of my general views in publication, I saw poor Janet was entirely thrown out, though, like a jaded hunter, panting, puffing, and short of wind, she endeavoured at least to keep up with the chase. Or rather her perplexity made her look all the while like a deaf person ashamed of his infirmity, who does not understand a word you are saying, yet desires you to believe that he does understand you, and who is extremely jealous that you suspect his incapacity. When she saw that some remark was necessary, she resembled exactly in her criticism the devotee who pitched on the 'sweet word Mesopotamia' as the most edifying note which she could bring away from a sermon. She indeed hastened to bestow general praise on what she said was all 'very fine'; but chiefly dwelt on what I had said about Mr. Timmerman, as she was pleased to call the German philosopher, and supposed he must be of the same descent with the Highland clan of M'Intyre, which signifies Son of the Carpenter. 'And a fery honourable name too — Shanet's own mither was a M'Intyre.'

In short, it was plain the latter part of my introduction was altogether lost on poor Janet; and so, to have acted up to Molière's system, I should have cancelled the whole, and written it anew. But I do not know how it is; I retained, I suppose, some tolerable opinion of my own composition, though Janet did not comprehend it, and felt loth to retrench those delilahs of the imagination, as Dryden calls them, the tropes and figures of which are caviar to the multitude. Besides, I hate rewriting as much as Falstaff did paying back: it is a double labour. So I determined with myself to consult Janet, in future, only on such things as were within the limits of her comprehension, and hazard my arguments and my rhetoric on the public without her imprimatur. I am pretty sure she will 'applaud it done.' And in such narratives as come within her range of thought and feeling, I shall, as I first intended, take the benefit of her unsophisticated judgment, and attend to it deferentially — that is, when it happens not to be in peculiar opposition to my own; for, after all, I say with Almanzor —

> Know that I alone am king of me.

The reader has now my who and my whereabout, the purpose of the work, and the circumstances under which it is undertaken. He has also a specimen of the author's talents, and may judge for himself, and proceed or send back the volume to the bookseller, as his own taste shall determine.

CHAPTER VI

Mr. Croftangry's Account of Mrs. Bethune Baliol

The moon, were she earthly, no nobler.
Coriolanus.

WHEN we set out on the jolly voyage of life, what a brave fleet there is around us, as, stretching our fresh canvas to the breeze, all 'shipshape and Bristol fashion,' pennons flying, music playing, cheering each other as we pass, we are rather amused than alarmed when some awkward comrade goes right ashore for want of pilotage! Alas! when the voyage is well spent, and we look about us, toil-worn mariners, how few of our ancient consorts still remain in sight, and they, how torn and wasted, and, like ourselves, struggling to keep as long as possible off the fatal shore against which we are all finally drifting!

I felt this very trite but melancholy truth in all its force the other day, when a packet with a black seal arrived, containing a letter addressed to me by my late excellent friend Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol, and marked with the fatal indorsation, 'To be delivered according to address, after I shall be no more.' A letter from her executors accompanied the packet, mentioning that they had found in her will a bequest to me of a painting of some value, which she stated would just fit the space above my cupboard, and fifty guineas to buy a ring. And thus I separated, with all the kindness which we had maintained for many years, from a friend who, though old enough to have been the companion of my mother, was yet, in gaiety of spirits and admirable sweetness of temper, capable of being agreeable, and even animating, society for those who write themselves in the vaward of youth — an advantage which I have lost for these five-and-thirty years. The contents of the packet I had no difficulty in guessing, and have partly hinted at them in the last chapter. But to instruct the reader in the particulars, and at the same time to indulge myself with recall-

ing the virtues and agreeable qualities of my late friend, I will give a short sketch of her manners and habits.

Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol was a person of quality and fortune, as these are esteemed in Scotland. Her family was ancient, and her connexions honourable. She was not fond of specially indicating her exact age, but her juvenile recollections stretched backwards till before the eventful year 1745; and she remembered the Highland clans being in possession of the Scottish capital, though probably only as an indistinct vision. Her fortune, independent by her father's bequest, was rendered opulent by the death of more than one brave brother, who fell successively in the service of their country; so that the family estates became vested in the only surviving child of the ancient house of Bethune Baliol. My intimacy was formed with the excellent lady after this event, and when she was already something advanced in age.

She inhabited, when in Edinburgh, where she regularly spent the winter season, one of those old hotels, which, till of late, were to be found in the neighbourhood of the Canongate and of the palace of Holyrood House, and which, separated from the street, now dirty and vulgar, by paved courts and gardens of some extent, made amends for an indifferent access, by showing something of aristocratic state and seclusion, when you were once admitted within their precincts. They have pulled her house down; for, indeed, betwixt building and burning, every ancient monument of the Scottish capital is now likely to be utterly demolished. I pause on the recollections of the place, however; and since nature has denied a pencil when she placed a pen in my hand, I will endeavour to make words answer the purpose of delineation.

Baliol's Lodging, so was the mansion named, reared its high stack of chimneys, among which were seen a turret or two, and one of those small projecting platforms called bartizans, above the mean and modern buildings which line the south side of the Canongate, towards the lower end of that street, and not distant from the palace. A *porte cochère*, having a wicket for foot-passengers, was, upon due occasion, unfolded by a lame old man, tall, grave, and thin, who tenanted a hovel beside the gate, and acted as porter. To this office he had been promoted by my friend's charitable feelings for an old soldier, and partly by an idea that his head, which was a very fine one, bore some resemblance to that of Garrick in the character of Lusignan. He was a man saturnine, silent, and slow in his

proceedings, and would never open the *porte cochère* to a hackney coach; indicating the wicket with his finger, as the proper passage for all who came in that obscure vehicle, which was not permitted to degrade with its ticketed presence the dignity of Baliol's Lodging. I do not think this peculiarity would have met with his lady's approbation, any more than the occasional partiality of Lusignan, or, as mortals called him, Archy Macready, to a dram. But Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol, conscious that, in case of conviction, she could never have prevailed upon herself to dethrone the King of Palestine from the stone bench on which he sat for hours, knitting his stocking, refused, by accrediting the intelligence, even to put him upon his trial; well judging that he would observe more wholesome caution if he conceived his character unsuspected than if he were detected, and suffered to pass unpunished. For, after all, she said, it would be cruel to dismiss an old Highland soldier for a peccadillo so appropriate to his country and profession.

The stately gate for carriages, or the humble accommodation for foot-passengers, admitted into a narrow and short passage, running between two rows of lime-trees, whose green foliage during the spring contrasted strangely with the swart complexion of the two walls by the side of which they grew. This access led to the front of the house, which was formed by two gable ends, notched, and having their windows adorned with heavy architectural ornaments; they joined each other at right angles, and a half-circular tower, which contained the entrance and the staircase, occupied the point of junction and rounded the acute angle. One of other two sides of the little court, in which there was just sufficient room to turn a carriage, was occupied by some low buildings answering the purpose of offices; the other, by a parapet surrounded by a highly-ornamented iron railing, twined round with honeysuckle and other parasitical shrubs, which permitted the eye to peep into a pretty suburban garden, extending down to the road called the South Back of the Canongate, and boasting a number of old trees, many flowers, and even some fruit. We must not forget to state, that the extreme cleanliness of the courtyard was such as intimated that mop and pail had done their utmost in that favoured spot to atone for the general dirt and dinginess of the quarter where the premises were situated.

Over the doorway were the arms of Bethune and Baliol, with various other devices carved in stone; the door itself was studded with iron nails, and formed of black oak; an iron

rasp,[1] as it was called, was placed on it, instead of a knocker, for the purpose of summoning the attendants. He who usually appeared at the summons was a smart lad, in a handsome livery, the son of Mrs. Martha's gardener at Mount Baliol. Now and then a servant-girl, nicely but plainly dressed, and fully accoutred with stockings and shoes, would perform this duty; and twice or thrice I remember being admitted by Beauffet himself, whose exterior looked as much like that of a clergyman of rank as the butler of a gentleman's family. He had been *valet-de-chambre* to the last Sir Richard Bethune Baliol, and was a person highly trusted by the present lady. A full stand, as it is called in Scotland, of garments of a dark colour, gold buckles in his shoes and at the knees of his breeches, with his hair regularly dressed and powdered, announced him to be a domestic of trust and importance. His mistress used to say of him,

> He 's sad and civil,
> And suits well for a servant with my fortunes.

As no one can escape scandal, some said that Beauffet made a rather better thing of the place than the modesty of his old-fashioned wages would, unassisted, have amounted to. But the man was always very civil to me. He had been long in the family, had enjoyed legacies, and laid by a something of his own, upon which he now enjoys ease with dignity, in as far as his newly-married wife, Tibbie Shortacres, will permit him.

The Lodging — dearest reader, if you are tired, pray pass over the next four or five pages — was not by any means so large as its external appearance led people to conjecture. The interior accommodation was much cut up by cross walls and long passages, and that neglect of economising space which characterises old Scottish architecture. But there was far more room than my old friend required, even when she had, as was often the case, four or five young cousins under her protection; and I believe much of the house was unoccupied. Mrs. Bethune Baliol never, in my presence, showed herself so much offended, as once with a meddling person who advised her to have the windows of these supernumerary apartments built up, to save the tax. She said in ire that, while she lived, the light of God should visit the house of her fathers; and while she had a penny, king and country should have their due. Indeed, she was punctiliously loyal, even in that most staggering test of

[1] See Note 19.

loyalty, the payment of imposts. Mr. Beauffet told me he was ordered to offer a glass of wine to the person who collected the income-tax, and that the poor man was so overcome by a reception so unwontedly generous, that he had wellnigh fainted on the spot.

You entered by a matted ante-room into the eating-parlour, filled with old-fashioned furniture, and hung with family portraits, which, excepting one of Sir Bernard Bethune, in James the Sixth's time, said to be by Jameson, were exceedingly frightful. A saloon, as it was called, a long narrow chamber, led out of the dining-parlour, and served for a drawing-room. It was a pleasant apartment, looking out upon the south flank of Holyrood House, the gigantic slope of Arthur's Seat, and the girdle of lofty rocks called Salisbury Crags [1] — objects so rudely wild, that the mind can hardly conceive them to exist in the vicinage of a populous metropolis. The paintings of the saloon came from abroad, and had some of them much merit. To see the best of them, however, you must be admitted into the very penetralia of the temple, and allowed to draw the tapestry at the upper end of the saloon, and enter Mrs. Martha's own special dressing-room. This was a charming apartment, of which it would be difficult to describe the form, it had so many recesses which were filled up with shelves of ebony, and cabinets of japan and ormolu; some for holding books, of which Mrs. Martha had an admirable collection, some for a display of ornamental china, others for shells and similar curiosities. In a little niche, half screened by a curtain of crimson silk, was disposed a suit of tilting armour of bright steel, inlaid with silver, which had been worn on some memorable occasion by Sir Bernard Bethune, already mentioned; while over the canopy of the niche hung the broadsword with which her father had attempted to change the fortunes of Britain in 1715, and the spontoon which her elder brother bore when he was leading on a company of the Black Watch [2] at Fontenoy.

There were some Italian and Flemish pictures of admitted authenticity, a few genuine bronzes and other objects of curiosity, which her brothers or herself had picked up while abroad. In short, it was a place where the idle were tempted to become studious, the studious to grow idle, where the grave might find matter to make them gay, and the gay subjects for gravity.

[1] See Note 20.

[2] See Note 21.

That it might maintain some title to its name, I must not forget to say, that the lady's dressing-room exhibited a superb mirror, framed in silver filigree work; a beautiful toilette, the cover of which was of Flanders lace; and a set of boxes corresponding in materials and work to the frame of the mirror.

This dressing apparatus, however, was mere matter of parade: Mrs. Martha Bethune Baliol always went through the actual duties of the toilette in an inner apartment, which corresponded with her sleeping-room by a small detached staircase. There were, I believe, more than one of those 'turnpike stairs,' as they were called, about the house, by which the public rooms, all of which entered through each other, were accommodated with separate and independent modes of access. In the little boudoir we have described, Mrs. Martha Baliol had her choicest meetings. She kept early hours; and if you went in the morning, you must not reckon that space of day as extending beyond three o'clock, or four at the utmost. These vigilant habits were attended with some restraint on her visitors, but they were indemnified by your always finding the best society, and the best information, which was to be had for the day in the Scottish capital. Without at all affecting the blue stocking, she liked books; they amused her, and if the authors were persons of character, she thought she owed them a debt of civility, which she loved to discharge by personal kindness. When she gave a dinner to a small party, which she did now and then, she had the good nature to look for, and the good luck to discover, what sort of people suited each other best, and chose her company as Duke Theseus did his hounds,

> Matched in mouth like bells,
> Each under each,[1]

so that every guest could take his part in the cry; instead of one mighty Tom of a fellow, like Dr. Johnson, silencing all besides by the tremendous depth of his diapason. On such occasions she afforded *chère exquise;* and every now and then there was some dish of French, or even Scottish, derivation, which, as well as the numerous assortment of *vins extraordinaires* produced by Mr. Beauffet, gave a sort of antique and foreign air to the entertainment, which rendered it more interesting.

It was a great thing to be asked to such parties, and not less so to be invited to the early *conversazione*, which, in spite of

[1] Shakspeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act iv. sc. 1.

fashion, by dint of the best coffee, the finest tea, and *chasse-café* that would have called the dead to life, she contrived now and then to assemble in her saloon already mentioned, at the unnatural hour of eight in the evening. At such times, the cheerful old lady seemed to enjoy herself so much in the happiness of her guests, that they exerted themselves in turn to prolong her amusement and their own; and a certain charm was excited around, seldom to be met with in parties of pleasure, and which was founded on the general desire of every one present to contribute something to the common amusement.

But although it was a great privilege to be admitted to wait on my excellent friend in the morning, or be invited to her dinner or evening parties, I prized still higher the right which I had acquired, by old acquaintance, of visiting Baliol's Lodging, upon the chance of finding its venerable inhabitant preparing for tea, just about six o'clock in the evening. It was only to two or three old friends that she permitted this freedom, nor was this sort of chance-party ever allowed to extend itself beyond five in number. The answer to those who came later announced that the company was filled up for the evening; which had the double effect of making those who waited on Mrs. Bethune Baliol in this unceremonious manner punctual in observing her hour, and of adding the zest of a little difficulty to the enjoyment of the party.

It more frequently happened that only one or two persons partook of this refreshment on the same evening; or, supposing the case of a single gentleman, Mrs. Martha, though she did not hesitate to admit him to her boudoir, after the privilege of the French and the old Scottish school, took care, as she used to say, to preserve all possible propriety, by commanding the attendance of her principal female attendant, Mrs. Alice Lambskin, who might, from the gravity and dignity of her appearance, have sufficed to matronise a whole boarding-school, instead of one maiden lady of eighty and upwards. As the weather permitted, Mrs. Alice sat duly remote from the company in a fauteuil behind the projecting chimney-piece, or in the embrasure of a window, and prosecuted in Carthusian silence, with indefatigable zeal, a piece of embroidery, which seemed no bad emblem of eternity.

But I have neglected all this while to introduce my friend herself to the reader, at least so far as words can convey the peculiarities by which her appearance and conversation were distinguished.

A little woman, with ordinary features, and an ordinary form, and hair which in youth had no decided colour, we may believe Mrs. Martha, when she said of herself that she was never remarkable for personal charms — a modest admission, which was readily confirmed by certain old ladies, her contemporaries, who, whatever might have been the youthful advantages which they more than hinted had been formerly their own share, were now, in personal appearance, as well as in everything else, far inferior to my accomplished friend. Mrs. Martha's features had been of a kind which might be said to wear well; their irregularity was now of little consequence, animated as they were by the vivacity of her conversation; her teeth were excellent; and her eyes, although inclining to grey, were lively, laughing, and undimmed by time. A slight shade of complexion, more brilliant than her years promised, subjected my friend amongst strangers to the suspicion of having stretched her foreign habits as far as the prudent touch of the rouge. But it was a calumny; for, when telling or listening to an interesting and affecting story, I have seen her colour come and go as if it played on the cheek of eighteen.

Her hair, whatever its former deficiencies, was now the most beautiful white that time could bleach, and was disposed with some degree of pretension, though in the simplest manner possible, so as to appear neatly smoothed under a cap of Flanders lace, of an old-fashioned, but, as I thought, of a very handsome form, which undoubtedly has a name, and I would endeavour to recur to it, if I thought it would make my description a bit more intelligible. I think I have heard her say these favourite caps had been her mother's, and had come in fashion with a peculiar kind of wig used by the gentlemen about the time of the battle of Ramillies. The rest of her dress was always rather costly and distinguished, especially in the evening. A silk or satin gown of some colour becoming her age, and of a form which, though complying to a certain degree with the present fashion, had always a reference to some more distant period, was garnished with triple ruffles; her shoes had diamond buckles, and were raised a little at heel, an advantage which, possessed in her youth, she alleged her size would not permit her to forego in her old age. She always wore rings, bracelets, and other ornaments of value, either for the materials or the workmanship; nay, perhaps she was a little profuse in this species of display. But she wore them as subordinate matters, to which the habits of being constantly in high life rendered

her indifferent: she wore them because her rank required it, and thought no more of them as articles of finery than a gentleman dressed for dinner thinks of his clean linen and well-brushed coat, the consciousness of which embarrasses the rustic beau on a Sunday.

Now and then, however, if a gem or ornament chanced to be noticed for its beauty or singularity, the observation usually led the way to an entertaining account of the manner in which it had been acquired, or the person from whom it had descended to its present possessor. On such and similar occasions my old friend spoke willingly, which is not uncommon, but she also, which is more rare, spoke remarkably well, and had in her little narratives concerning foreign parts, or former days, which formed an interesting part of her conversation, the singular art of dismissing all the usual protracted tautology respecting time, place, and circumstances, which is apt to settle like a mist upon the cold and languid tales of age, and at the same time of bringing forward, dwelling upon, and illustrating those incidents and characters which give point and interest to the story.

She had, as we have hinted, travelled a good deal in foreign countries; for a brother, to whom she was much attached, had been sent upon various missions of national importance to the continent, and she had more than once embraced the opportunity of accompanying him. This furnished a great addition to the information which she could supply, especially during the last war, when the continent was for so many years hermetically sealed against the English nation. But, besides, Mrs. Bethune Baliol visited distant countries, not in the modern fashion, when English travel in caravans together, and see in France and Italy little besides the same society which they might have enjoyed at home. On the contrary, she mingled when abroad with the natives of those countries she visited, and enjoyed at once the advantage of their society and the pleasure of comparing it with that of Britain.

In the course of her becoming habituated with foreign manners, Mrs. Bethune Baliol had, perhaps, acquired some slight tincture of them herself. Yet I was always persuaded that the peculiar vivacity of look and manner, the pointed and appropriate action with which she accompanied what she said, the use of the gold and gemmed *tabatière*, or rather I should say *bonbonnière* (for she took no snuff, and the little box contained only a few pieces of candied angelica, or some such ladylike

sweetmeat), were of real old-fashioned Scottish growth, and such as might have graced the tea-table of Susannah Countess of Eglinton,[1] the patroness of Allan Ramsay, or of the Hon. Mrs. Colonel Ogilvy, who was another mirror by whom the maidens of Auld Reekie were required to dress themselves. Although well acquainted with the customs of other countries, her manners had been chiefly formed in her own, at a time when great folk lived within little space, and when the distinguished names of the highest society gave to Edinburgh the *éclat* which we now endeavour to derive from the unbounded expense and extended circle of our pleasures.

I was more confirmed in this opinion by the peculiarity of the dialect which Mrs. Baliol used. It was Scottish — decidedly Scottish, often containing phrases and words little used in the present day. But then her tone and mode of pronunciation were as different from the usual accent of the ordinary Scotch *patois* as the accent of St. James's is from that of Billingsgate. The vowels were not pronounced much broader than in the Italian language, and there was none of the disagreeable drawl which is so offensive to southern ears. In short, it seemed to be the Scottish as spoken by the ancient court of Scotland, to which no idea of vulgarity could be attached; and the lively manner and gestures with which it was accompanied were so completely in accord with the sound of the voice and the style of talking that I cannot assign them a different origin. In long derivation, perhaps the manner of the Scottish court might have been originally formed on that of France, to which it had certainly some affinity; but I will live and die in the belief that the [illegible]e of Mrs. Baliol, as pleasing as they were peculiar, came by direct descent from the high dames who anciently adorned with their presence the royal halls of Holyrood.

[1] See Note 22.

CHAPTER VII

Mrs. Baliol Assists Mr. Croftangry in His Literary Speculations

SUCH as I have described Mrs. Bethune Baliol, the reader will easily believe that, when I thought of the miscellaneous nature of my work, I rested upon the information she possessed, and her communicative disposition, s one of the principal supports of my enterprise. Indeed, s... by no means disapproved of my proposed publication, though expressing herself very doubtful how far she could personally assist it — a doubt which might be perhaps set down to a little ladylike coquetry, which required to be sued for the boon she was not unwilling to grant. Or, perhaps, the good old lady, conscious that her unusual term of years must soon draw to a close, preferred bequeathing the materials in the shape of a legacy to subjecting them to the judgment of a critical public during her lifetime.

Many a time I used, in our conversations of the Canongate, to resume my request of assistance, from a sense that my friend was the most valuable depository of Scottish traditions that was probably now to be found. This was a subject on which my mind was so much made up, that when I heard her carry her description of manners so far back beyond her own time, and describe how Fletcher of Salton spoke, how Graham of Claverhouse danced, what were the jewels worn by the famous Duchess of Lauderdale, and how she came by them, I could not help telling her I thought her some fairy, who cheated us by retaining the appearance of a mortal of our own day, when, in fact, she had witnessed the revolutions of centuries. She was much diverted when I required her to take some solemn oath that she had not danced at the balls given by Mary of Este, when her unhappy husband[1] occupied Holyrood in a species of honourable banishment ; or asked whether she could not rec-

[1] The Duke of York, afterwards James II., frequently resided in Holyrood House, when his religion rendered him an object of suspicion to the English Parliament.

ollect Charles the Second, when he came to Scotland in 1650, and did not possess some slight recollections of the bold usurper who drove him beyond the Forth.

'*Beau cousin*,' she said, laughing, 'none of these do I remember personally; but you must know there has been wonderfully little change on my natural temper from youth to age. From which it follows, cousin, that, being even now something too young in spirit for the years which Time has marked me in his calendar, I was, when a girl, a little too old for those of my own standing, and as much inclined at that period to keep the society of elder persons as I am now disposed to admit the company of gay young fellows of fifty or sixty like yourself, rather than collect about me all the octogenarians. Now, although I do not actually come from elfland, and therefore cannot boast any personal knowledge of the great personages you inquire about, yet I have seen and heard those who knew them well, and who have given me as distinct an account of them as I could give you myself of the Empress-Queen or Frederick of Prussia; and I will frankly add,' said she, laughing and offering her *bonbonnière*, 'that *I have* heard so much of the years which immediately succeeded the Revolution, that I sometimes am apt to confuse the vivid descriptions fixed on my memory by the frequent and animated recitation of others for things which I myself have actually witnessed. I caught myself but yesterday describing to Lord M—— the riding of the last Scottish Parliament, with as much minuteness as if I had seen it, as my mother did, from the balcony in front of Lord Moray's lodging in the Canongate.'

'I am sure you must have given Lord M—— a high treat.'

'I treated him to a hearty laugh, I believe,' she replied; 'but it is you, you vile seducer of youth, who lead me into such follies. But I will be on my guard against my own weakness. I do not well know if the Wandering Jew is supposed to have a wife, but I should be sorry a decent middle-aged Scottish gentlewoman should be suspected of identity with such a supernatural person.'

'For all that, I must torture you a little more, *ma belle cousine*, with my interrogatories; for how shall I ever turn author unless on the strength of the information which you have so often procured me on the ancient state of manners?'

'Stay, I cannot allow you to give your points of inquiry a name so very venerable, if I am expected to answer them. Ancient is a term for antediluvians. You may catechise me

about the battle of Flodden, or ask particulars about Bruce and Wallace, under pretext of curiosity after ancient manners; and that last subject would wake my Baliol blood, you know.'

'Well, but, Mrs. Baliol, suppose we settle our era. You do not call the accession of James the Sixth to the kingdom of Britain very ancient?'

'Umph! no, cousin. I think I could tell you more of that than folk nowadays remember; for instance, that, as James was trooping towards England, bag and baggage, his journey was stopped near Cockenzie by meeting the funeral of the Earl of Winton,[1] the old and faithful servant and follower of his ill-fated mother, poor Mary. It was an ill omen for the "infare," and so was seen of it, cousin.'

I did not choose to prosecute this subject, well knowing Mrs. Bethune Baliol did not like to be much pressed on the subject of the Stuarts, whose misfortunes she pitied, the rather that her father had espoused their cause. And yet her attachment to the present dynasty being very sincere, and even ardent, more especially as her family had served his late Majesty both in peace and war, she experienced a little embarrassment in reconciling her opinions respecting the exiled family with those she entertained for the present. In fact, like many an old Jacobite, she was contented to be somewhat inconsistent on the subject, comforting herself that *now* everything stood as it ought to do, and that there was no use in looking back narrowly on the right or wrong of the matter half a century ago.

'The Highlands,' I suggested, 'should furnish you with ample subjects of recollection. You have witnessed the complete change of that primeval country, and have seen a race not far removed from the earliest period of society melted down into the great mass of civilisation; and that could not happen without incidents striking in themselves, and curious as chapters in the history of the human race.'

'It is very true,' said Mrs. Baliol; 'one would think it should have struck the observers greatly, and yet it scarcely did so. For me, I was no Highlander myself, and the Highland chiefs of old, of whom I certainly knew several, had little in their manners to distinguish them from the Lowland gentry when they mixed in society in Edinburgh, and assumed the Lowland dress. Their peculiar character was for the clansmen at home; and you must not imagine that they swaggered

[1] See Note 23.

about in plaids and broadswords at the Cross, or came to the Assembly Rooms in bonnets and kilts.'

'I remember,' said I, 'that Swift, in his *Journal*, tells Stella he had dined in the house of a Scots nobleman, with two Highland chiefs, whom he had found as well-bred men as he had ever met with.'[1]

'Very likely,' said my friend. 'The extremes of society approach much more closely to each other than perhaps the Dean of St. Patrick's expected. The savage is always to a certain degree polite. Besides, going always armed, and having a very punctilious idea of their own gentility and consequence, they usually behaved to each other and to the Lowlanders with a good deal of formal politeness, which sometimes even procured them the character of insincerity.'

'Falsehood belongs to an early period of society, as well as the deferential forms which we style politeness,' I replied. 'A child does not see the least moral beauty in truth until he has been flogged half a dozen times. It is so easy, and apparently so natural, to deny what you cannot be easily convicted of, that a savage as well as a child lies to excuse himself, almost as instinctively as he raises his hand to protect his head. The old saying, "confess and be hanged," carries much argument in it. I observed a remark the other day in old Birrell. He mentions that M'Gregor of Glenstrae[2] and some of his people had surrendered themselves to one of the Earls of Argyle, upon the express condition that they should be conveyed safe into England. The MacCallan Mhor of the day kept the word of promise, but it was only to the ear. He indeed sent his captives to Berwick, where they had an airing on the other side of the Tweed, but it was under the custody of a strong guard, by whom they were brought back to Edinburgh and delivered to the executioner. This Birrell calls "keeping a Highlandman's promise."'

'Well,' replied Mrs. Baliol, 'I might add, that many of the Highland chiefs whom I knew in former days had been brought up in France, which might improve their politeness, though perhaps it did not amend their sincerity. But, considering that, belonging to the depressed and defeated faction in the state, they were compelled sometimes to use dissimulation, you must set their uniform fidelity to their friends against

[1] Extract of Journal to Stella.—'I dined to-day (12th March 1712) with Lord Treasurer and two gentlemen of the Highlands of Scotland, yet very polite men.' — Swift's *Works*, vol. iii. p. 7, Edin. 1824.

[2] See Note 24.

their occasional falsehood to their enemies, and then you will not judge poor John Highlandman too severely. They were in a state of society where bright lights are strongly contrasted with deep shadows.'

'It is to that point I would bring you, *ma belle cousine*, and therefore they are most proper subjects for composition.'

'And you want to turn composer, my good friend, and set my old tales to some popular tune? But there have been too many composers, if that be the word, in the field before. The Highlands *were* indeed a rich mine; but they have, I think, been fairly wrought out, as a good tune is grinded into vulgarity when it descends to the hurdy-gurdy and the barrel-organ.'

'If it be really tune,' I replied, 'it will recover its better qualities when it gets into the hands of better artists.'

'Umph!' said Mrs. Baliol, tapping her box, 'we are happy in our own good opinion this evening, Mr. Croftangry. And so you think you can restore the gloss to the tartan, which it has lost by being dragged through so many fingers?'

'With your assistance to procure materials, my dear lady, much, I think, may be done.'

'Well, I must do my best, I suppose; though all I know about the Gael is but of little consequence. Indeed, I gathered it chiefly from Donald MacLeish.'

'And who might Donald MacLeish be?'

'Neither bard nor seannachie, I assure you, nor monk nor hermit, the approved authorities for old traditions. Donald was as good a postilion as ever drove a chaise and pair between Glencroe and Inverary. I assure you, when I give you my Highland anecdotes, you will hear much of Donald MacLeish. He was Alice Lambskin's beau and mine through a long Highland tour.'

'But when am I to possess these anecdotes? You answer me as Harley did poor Prior —

> Let that be done which Mat doth say.
> "Yea," quoth the earl, "but not to-day."'

'Well, *mon beau cousin*, if you begin to remind me of my cruelty, I must remind you it has struck nine on the Abbey clock, and it is time you were going home to Little Croftangry. For my promise to assist your antiquarian researches, be assured I will one day keep it to the utmost extent. It shall not be a Highlandman's promise, as your old citizen calls it.'

I by this time suspected the purpose of my friend's pro-

crastination; and it saddened my heart to reflect that I was not to get the information which I desired, excepting in the shape of a legacy. I found, accordingly, in the packet transmitted to me after the excellent lady's death, several anecdotes respecting the Highlands, from which I have selected that which follows, chiefly on account of its possessing great power over the feelings of my critical housekeeper, Janet M'Evoy, who wept most bitterly when I read it to her. It is, however, but a very simple tale, and may have no interest for persons beyond Janet's rank of life or understanding.

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW

THE HIGHLAND WIDOW

CHAPTER I

It wound as near as near could be,
But what it is she cannot tell;
On the other side it seemed to be
Of the huge broad-breasted old oak-tree.

COLERIDGE.

MRS. BETHUNE BALIOL'S memorandum begins thus:—

It is five-and-thirty, or perhaps nearer forty, years ago, since, to relieve the dejection of spirits occasioned by a great family loss sustained two or three months before, I undertook what was called the short Highland tour. This had become in some degree fashionable; but though the military roads were excellent, yet the accommodation was so indifferent, that it was reckoned a little adventure to accomplish it. Besides, the Highlands, though now as peaceable as any part of King George's dominions, was a sound which still carried terror, while so many survived who had witnessed the insurrection of 1745; and a vague idea of fear was impressed on many, as they looked from the towers of Stirling northward to the huge chain of mountains, which rises like a dusky rampart to conceal in its recesses a people whose dress, manners, and language differed still very much from those of their Lowland countrymen. For my part, I come of a race not greatly subject to apprehensions arising from imagination only. I had some Highland relatives, knew several of their families of distinction; and, though only having the company of my bower-maiden, Mrs. Alice Lambskin, I went on my journey fearless.

But then I had a guide and cicerone almost equal to Great-heart in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, in no less a person than Donald MacLeish, the postilion whom I hired at Stirling, with a pair of able-bodied horses, as steady as Donald himself, to drag

my carriage, my duenna, and myself, wheresoever it was my pleasure to go.

Donald MacLeish was one of a race of post-boys whom, I suppose, mail-coaches and steam-boats have put out of fashion. They were to be found chiefly at Perth, Stirling, or Glasgow, where they and their horses were usually hired by travellers, or tourists, to accomplish such journeys of business or pleasure as they might have to perform in the land of the Gael. This class of persons approached to the character of what is called abroad a *conducteur*; or might be compared to the sailing-master on board a British ship of war, who follows out after his own manner the course which the captain commands him to observe. You explained to your postilion the length of your tour, and the objects you were desirous it should embrace; and you found him perfectly competent to fix the places of rest or refreshment, with due attention that those should be chosen with reference to your convenience, and to any points of interest which you might desire to visit.

The qualifications of such a person were necessarily much superior to those of the 'first ready,' who gallops thrice a day over the same ten miles. Donald MacLeish, besides being quite alert at repairing all ordinary accidents to his horses and carriage, and in making shift to support them, where forage was scarce, with such substitutes as bannocks and cakes, was likewise a man of intellectual resources. He had acquired a general knowledge of the traditional stories of the country which he had traversed so often; and, if encouraged (for Donald was a man of the most decorous reserve), he would willingly point out to you the site of the principal clan-battles, and recount the most remarkable legends by which the road, and the objects which occurred in travelling it, had been distinguished. There was some originality in the man's habits of thinking and expressing himself, his turn for legendary lore strangely contrasting with a portion of the knowing shrewdness belonging to his actual occupation, which made his conversation amuse the way well enough.

Add to this, Donald knew all his peculiar duties in the country which he traversed so frequently. He could tell, to a day, when they would be 'killing lamb' at Tyndrum or Glenuilt, so that the stranger would have some chance of being fed like a Christian; and knew to a mile the last village where it was possible to procure a wheaten loaf, for the guidance of those who were little familiar with the Land of Cakes. He

was acquainted with the road every mile, and could tell to an inch which side of a Highland bridge was passable, which decidedly dangerous.[1] In short, Donald MacLeish was not only our faithful attendant and steady servant, but our humble and obliging friend; and though I have known the half-classical cicerone of Italy, the talkative French *valet-de-place*, and even the muleteer of Spain, who piques himself on being a maize-eater, and whose honour is not to be questioned without danger, I do not think I have ever had so sensible and intelligent a guide.

Our motions were, of course, under Donald's direction; and it frequently happened, when the weather was serene, that we preferred halting to rest his horses even where there was no established stage, and taking our refreshment under a crag, from which leaped a waterfall, or beside the verge of a fountain, enamelled with verdant turf and wild-flowers. Donald had an eye for such spots, and though he had, I daresay, never read *Gil Blas* or *Don Quixote*, yet he chose such halting-places as Le Sage or Cervantes would have described. Very often, as he observed the pleasure I took in conversing with the country people, he would manage to fix our place of rest near a cottage where there was some old Gael whose broadsword had blazed at Falkirk or Preston, and who seemed the frail yet faithful record of times which had passed away. Or he would contrive to quarter us, as far as a cup of tea went, upon the hospitality of some parish minister of worth and intelligence, or some country family of the better class, who mingled with the wild simplicity of their original manners, and their ready and hospitable welcome, a sort of courtesy belonging to a people the lowest of whom are accustomed to consider themselves as being, according to the Spanish phrase, 'as good gentlemen as the king, only not quite so rich.'

To all such persons Donald MacLeish was well known, and his introduction passed as current as if we had brought letters from some high chief of the country.

Sometimes it happened that the Highland hospitality, which welcomed us with all the variety of mountain fare, preparations of milk and eggs, and girdle-cakes of various kinds, as well as more substantial dainties, according to the inhabitant's means of regaling the passenger, descended rather too exuberantly on Donald MacLeish in the shape of mountain dew. Poor Donald! he was on such occasions like Gideon's fleece, moist

[1] See Highland Bridges. Note 25.

with the noble element, which, of course, fell not on us. But it was his only fault, and when pressed to drink *doch-an-dorroch* to my ladyship's good health, it would have been ill taken to have refused the pledge, nor was he willing to do such discourtesy. It was, I repeat, his only fault, nor had we any great right to complain; for if it rendered him a little more talkative, it augmented his ordinary share of punctilious civility, and he only drove slower, and talked longer and more pompously, than when he had not come by a drop of usquebaugh. It was, we remarked, only on such occasions that Donald talked with an air of importance of the family of MacLeish; and we had no title to be scrupulous in censuring a foible the consequences of which were confined within such innocent limits.

We became so much accustomed to Donald's mode of managing us, that we observed with some interest the art which he used to produce a little agreeable surprise, by concealing from us the spot where he proposed our halt to be made, when it was of an unusual and interesting character. This was so much his wont, that, when he made apologies at setting off, for being obliged to stop in some strange, solitary place till the horses should eat the corn which he brought on with them for that purpose, our imagination used to be on the stretch to guess what romantic retreat he had secretly fixed upon for our noontide baiting-place.

We had spent the greater part of the morning at the delightful village of Dalmally, and had gone upon the lake under the guidance of the excellent clergyman who was then incumbent at Glenorquhy,[1] and had heard an hundred legends of the stern chiefs of Loch Awe,[2] Duncan with the thrum bonnet, and the other lords of the now mouldering towers of Kilchurn. Thus it was later than usual when we set out on our journey, after a hint or two from Donald concerning the length of the way to the next stage, as there was no good halting-place between Dalmally and Oban.

Having bid adieu to our venerable and kind cicerone, we proceeded on our tour, winding round the tremendous mountain called Ben Cruachan, which rushes down in all its majesty of rocks and wilderness on the lake, leaving only a pass, in which, notwithstanding its extreme strength, the warlike clan of MacDougal of Lorn were almost destroyed by the sagacious Robert Bruce. That king, the Wellington of his day, had accomplished

[1] This venerable and hospitable gentleman's name was MacIntyre.
[2] See Note 26.

KILCHURN CASTLE, LOCH AWE.
From a painting by McCulloch.

by a forced march, the unexpected manœuvre of forcing a body of troops round the other side of the mountain, and thus placed them in the flank and in the rear of the men of Lorn, whom at the same time he attacked in front. The great number of cairns yet visible, as you descend the pass on the westward side, shows the extent of the vengeance which Bruce exhausted on his inveterate and personal enemies. I am, you know, the sister of soldiers, and it has since struck me forcibly that the manœuvre which Donald described resembled those of Wellington or of Bonaparte. He was a great man Robert Bruce, even a Baliol must admit that; although it begins now to be allowed that his title to the crown was scarce so good as that of the unfortunate family with whom he contended. But let that pass. The slaughter had been the greater, as the deep and rapid river Awe is disgorged from the lake, just in the rear of the fugitives, and encircles the base of the tremendous mountain; so that the retreat of the unfortunate fliers was intercepted on all sides by the inaccessible character of the country, which had seemed to promise them defence and protection.[1]

Musing, like the Irish lady in the song, 'upon things which are long enough a-gone,'[2] we felt no impatience at the slow, and almost creeping, pace with which our conductor proceeded along General Wade's military road, which never or rarely condescends to turn aside from the steepest ascent, but proceeds right up and down hill, with the indifference to height and hollow, steep or level, indicated by the old Roman engineers. Still, however, the substantial excellence of these great works —for such are the military highways in the Highlands— deserved the compliment of the poet, who, whether he came from our sister kingdom, and spoke in his own dialect, or whether he supposed those whom he addressed might have some national pretension to the second sight, produced the celebrated couplet —

> Had you but seen these roads *before* they were made,
> You would hold up your hands, and bless General Wade.

Nothing indeed can be more wonderful than to see these wildernesses penetrated and pervious in every quarter by broad accesses of the best possible construction, and so superior to what the country could have demanded for many centuries for

[1] See Battle betwixt Bruce and Macdougal of Lorn. Note 27.

[2] This is a line from a very pathetic ballad which I heard sung by one of the young ladies of Edgeworthstown in 1825. I do not know that it has been printed.

any pacific purpose of commercial intercourse. Thus the traces of war are sometimes happily accommodated to the purposes of peace. The victories of Bonaparte have been without results; but his road over the Simplon will long be the communication betwixt peaceful countries, who will apply to the ends of commerce and friendly intercourse that gigantic work which was formed for the ambitious purpose of warlike invasion.

While we were thus stealing along, we gradually turned round the shoulder of Ben Cruachan, and descending the course of the foaming and rapid Awe, left behind us the expanse of the majestic lake which gives birth to that impetuous river. The rocks and precipices which stooped down perpendicularly on our path on the right hand exhibited a few remains of the wood which once clothed them, but which had, in latter times, been felled to supply, Donald MacLeish informed us, the iron-founderies at the Bunawe. This made us fix our eyes with interest on one large oak, which grew on the left hand towards the river. It seemed a tree of extraordinary magnitude and picturesque beauty, and stood just where there appeared to be a few roods of open ground lying among huge stones, which had rolled down from the mountain. To add to the romance of the situation, the spot of clear ground extended round the foot of a proud-browed rock, from the summit of which leaped a mountain stream in a fall of sixty feet, in which it was dissolved into foam and dew. At the bottom of the fall the rivulet with difficulty collected, like a routed general, its dispersed forces, and, as if tamed by its descent, found a noiseless passage through the heath to join the Awe.

I was much struck with the tree and waterfall, and wished myself nearer them; not that I thought of sketch-book or portfolio — for, in my younger days, misses were not accustomed to black-lead pencils, unless they could use them to some good purpose — but merely to indulge myself with a closer view. Donald immediately opened the chaise door, but observed it was rough walking down the brae, and that I would see the tree better by keeping the road for a hundred yards farther, when it passed closer to the spot, for which he seemed, however, to have no predilection. 'He knew,' he said, 'a far bigger tree than that nearer Bunawe, and it was a place where there was flat ground for the carriage to stand, which it could jimply do on these braes; but just as my leddyship liked.'

My ladyship did choose rather to look at the fine tree before me than to pass it by in hopes of a finer; so we walked beside

the carriage till we should come to a point from which, Donald assured us, we might, without scrambling, go as near the tree as we chose, 'though he wadna advise us to go nearer than the highroad.'

There was something grave and mysterious in Donald's sun-browned countenance when he gave us this intimation, and his manner was so different from his usual frankness, that my female curiosity was set in motion. We walked on the whilst, and I found the tree, of which we had now lost sight by the intervention of some rising ground, was really more distant than I had at first supposed. 'I could have sworn now,' said I to my cicerone, 'that yon tree and waterfall was the very place where you intended to make a stop to-day.'

'The Lord forbid!' said Donald, hastily.

'And for what, Donald? why should you be willing to pass so pleasant a spot?'

'It's ower near Dalmally, my leddy, to corn the beasts: it would bring their dinner ower near their breakfast, poor things; an', besides, the place is not canny.'

'Oh! then the mystery is out. There is a bogle or a brownie, a witch or a gyre-carlin, a bodach or a fairy in the case?'

'The ne'er a bit, my leddy: ye are clean aff the road, as I may say. But if your leddyship will just hae patience, and wait till we are by the place and out of the glen, I'll tell ye all about it. There is no much luck in speaking of such things in the place they chanced in.'

I was obliged to suspend my curiosity, observing, that if I persisted in twisting the discourse one way while Donald was twining it another, I should make his objection, like a hempen cord, just so much the tougher. At length the promised turn of the road brought us within fifty paces of the tree which I desired to admire, and I now saw to my surprise that there was a human habitation among the cliffs which surrounded it. It was a hut of the least dimensions, and most miserable description, that I ever saw even in the Highlands. The walls of sod, or 'divot,' as the Scotch call it, were not four feet high; the roof was of turf, repaired with reeds and sedges; the chimney was composed of clay, bound round by straw ropes; and the whole walls, roof, and chimney were alike covered with the vegetation of house-leek, rye-grass, and moss, common to decayed cottages formed of such materials. There was not the slightest vestige of a kale-yard, the usual accompaniment of the

very worst huts; and of living things we saw nothing, save a kid which was browsing on the roof of the hut, and a goat, its mother, at some distance, feeding betwixt the oak and the river Awe.

'What man,' I could not help exclaiming, 'can have committed sin deep enough to deserve such a miserable dwelling!'

'Sin enough,' said Donald MacLeish, with a half-suppressed groan; 'and God He knoweth, misery enough too; and it is no man's dwelling neither, but a woman's.'

'A woman's!' I repeated, 'and in so lonely a place. What sort of a woman can she be?'

'Come this way, my leddy, and you may judge that for yourself,' said Donald. And by advancing a few steps, and making a sharp turn to the left, we gained a sight of the side of the great broad-breasted oak, in the direction opposed to that in which we had hitherto seen it.

'If she keeps her old wont, she will be there at this hour of the day,' said Donald; but immediately became silent, and pointed with his finger, as one afraid of being overheard. I looked, and beheld, not without some sense of awe, a female form seated by the stem of the oak, with her head drooping, her hands clasped, and a dark-coloured mantle drawn over her head, exactly as Judah is represented in the Syrian medals as seated under her palm-tree. I was infected with the fear and reverence which my guide seemed to entertain towards this solitary being, nor did I think of advancing towards her to obtain a nearer view until I had cast an inquiring look on Donald; to which he replied in a half-whisper — 'She has been a fearfu' bad woman, my leddy.'

'Mad woman, said you,' replied I, hearing him imperfectly; 'then she is perhaps dangerous?'

'No, she is not mad,' replied Donald; 'for then it may be she would be happier than she is; though when she thinks on what she has done, and caused to be done, rather than yield up a hair-breadth of her ain wicked will, it is not likely she can be very well settled. But she neither is mad nor mischievous; and yet, my leddy, I think you had best not go nearer to her.' And then, in a few hurried words, he made me acquainted with the story which I am now to tell more in detail. I heard the narrative with a mixture of horror and sympathy, which at once impelled me to approach the sufferer, and speak to her the words of comfort, or rather of pity, and at the same time made me afraid to do so.

This indeed was the feeling with which she was regarded by the Highlanders in the neighbourhood, who looked upon Elspat MacTavish, or the Woman of the Tree, as they called her, as the Greeks considered those who were pursued by the Furies, and endured the mental torment consequent on great criminal actions. They regarded such unhappy beings as Orestes and Œdipus as being less the voluntary perpetrators of their crimes than as the passive instruments by which the terrible decrees of Destiny had been accomplished; and the fear with which they beheld them was not unmingled with veneration.

I also learned farther from Donald MacLeish, that there was some apprehension of ill luck attending those who had the boldness to approach too near, or disturb the awful solitude of a being so unutterably miserable: that it was supposed that whosoever approached her must experience in some respect the contagion of her wretchedness.

It was therefore with some reluctance that Donald saw me prepare to obtain a nearer view of the sufferer, and that he himself followed to assist me in the descent down a very rough path. I believe his regard for me conquered some ominous feelings in his own breast, which connected his duty on this occasion with the presaging fear of lame horses, lost linch-pins, overturns, and other perilous chances of the postilion's life.

I am not sure if my own courage would have carried me so close to Elspat, had he not followed. There was in her countenance the stern abstraction of hopeless and overpowering sorrow, mixed with the contending feelings of remorse, and of the pride which struggled to conceal it. She guessed, perhaps, that it was curiosity, arising out of her uncommon story, which induced me to intrude on her solitude; and she could not be pleased that a fate like hers had been the theme of a traveller's amusement. Yet the look with which she regarded me was one of scorn instead of embarrassment. The opinion of the world and all its children could not add or take an iota from her load of misery; and, save from the half-smile that seemed to intimate the contempt of a being rapt by the very intensity of her affliction above the sphere of ordinary humanities, she seemed as indifferent to my gaze as if she had been a dead corpse or a marble statue.

Elspat was above the middle stature; her hair, now grizzled, was still profuse, and it had been of the most decided black. So were her eyes, in which, contradicting the stern and rigid features of her countenance, there shone the wild and troubled

light that indicates an unsettled mind. Her hair was wrapt round a silver bodkin with some attention to neatness, and her dark mantle was disposed around her with a degree of taste though the materials were of the most ordinary sort.

After gazing on this victim of guilt and calamity till I was ashamed to remain silent, though uncertain how I ought to address her, I began to express my surprise at her choosing such a desert and deplorable dwelling. She cut short these expressions of sympathy, by answering in a stern voice, without the least change of countenance or posture — 'Daughter of the stranger, he has told you my story.' I was silenced at once, and felt how little all earthly accommodation must seem to the mind which had such subjects as hers for rumination. Without again attempting to open the conversation, I took a piece of gold from my purse, for Donald had intimated she lived on alms, expecting she would at least stretch her hand to receive it. But she neither accepted nor rejected the gift; she did not even seem to notice it, though twenty times as valuable, probably, as was usually offered. I was obliged to place it on her knee, saying involuntarily, as I did so, 'May God pardon you, and relieve you!' I shall never forget the look which she cast up to Heaven, nor the tone in which she exclaimed, in the very words of my old friend, John Home —

'My beautiful — my brave!'

It was the language of nature, and arose from the heart of the deprived mother, as it did from that gifted imaginative poet, while furnishing with appropriate expressions the ideal grief of Lady Randolph.

CHAPTER II

O, I 'm come to the Low Country,
Och, och, ohonochie,
Without a penny in my pouch
To buy a meal for me.
I was the proudest of my clan,
Long, long may I repine;
And Donald was the bravest man,
And Donald he was mine.

Old Song.

ELSPAT had enjoyed happy days, though her age had sunk into hopeless and inconsolable sorrow and distress. She was once the beautiful and happy wife of Hamish MacTavish, for whom his strength and feats of prowess had gained the title of MacTavish Mhor. His life was turbulent and dangerous, his habits being of the old Highland stamp, which esteemed it shame to want anything that could be had for the taking. Those in the Lowland line who lay near him, and desired to enjoy their lives and property in quiet, were contented to pay him a small composition, in name of protection-money, and comforted themselves with the old proverb, that it was 'better to fleech the deil than fight him.' Others, who accounted such composition dishonourable, were often surprised by MacTavish Mhor and his associates and followers, who usually inflicted an adequate penalty, either in person or property, or both. The creagh is yet remembered in which he swept one hundred and fifty cows from Monteith in one drove; and how he placed the laird of Ballybught naked in a slough, for having threatened to send for a party of the Highland Watch to protect his property.

Whatever were occasionally the triumphs of this daring cateran, they were often exchanged for reverses; and his narrow escapes, rapid flights, and the ingenious stratagems with which he extricated himself from imminent danger, were no less remembered and admired than the exploits in which he had been successful. In weal or woe, through every species of fatigue,

difficulty, and danger, Elspat was his faithful companion. She enjoyed with him the fits of occasional prosperity; and when adversity pressed them hard, her strength of mind, readiness of wit, and courageous endurance of danger and toil are said often to have stimulated the exertions of her husband.

Their morality was of the old Highland cast, faithful friendships and fierce enmities: the Lowland herds and harvests they accounted their own, whenever they had the means of driving off the owner of seizing upon the other; nor did the least scruple or the slightest right of property interfere on such occasions. Hamish Mhor argued like the old Cretan warrior:

> My sword, my spear, my shaggy shield,
> They make me lord of all below;
> For [illegible] is the lance to wield
> [illegible] my shaggy shield must bow;
> [illegible] his vineyards, must resign,
> [illegible] that cowards have is mine.

But those days of perilous, though frequently successful, depredation began to be abridged after the failure of the expedition of Prince Charles Edward. MacTavish Mhor had not sat still on that occasion, and he was outlawed, both as a traitor to the state and as a robber and cateran. Garrisons were now settled in many places where a redcoat had never before been seen, and the Saxon war-drum resounded among the most hidden recesses of the Highland mountains. The fate of MacTavish became every day more inevitable; and it was the more difficult for him to make his exertions for defence or escape, that Elspat, amid his evil days, had increased his family with an infant child, which was a considerable encumbrance upon the necessary rapidity of their motions.

At length the fatal day arrived. In a strong pass on the skirts of Ben Cruachan, the celebrated MacTavish Mhor was surprised by a detachment of the 'sidier roy.' His wife assisted him heroically, charging his piece from time to time; and as they were in possession of a post that was nearly unassailable, he might have perhaps escaped if his ammunition had lasted. But at length his balls were expended, although it was not until he had fired off most of the silver buttons from his waistcoat, and the soldiers, no longer deterred by fear of the unerring marksman, who had slain three and wounded more of their number, approached his stronghold, and, unable to take him alive, slew him, after a most desperate resistance.

All this Elspat witnessed and survived, for she had, in the

child which relied on her for support, a motive for strength and exertion. In what manner she maintained herself it is not easy to say. Her only ostensible means of support were a flock of three or four goats, which she fed wherever she pleased on the mountain pastures, no one challenging the intrusion. In the general distress of the country, her ancient acquaintances had little to bestow; but what they could part with from their own necessities they willingly devoted to the relief of others. From Lowlanders she sometimes demanded tribute, rather than requested alms. She had not forgotten she was the widow of MacTavish Mhor, or that the child who trotted by her knee might, such were her imaginations, emulate one day the fame of his father, and command the same influence which he had once exerted without control. She associated so little with others, went so seldom and so unwillingly from the wildest recesses of the mountains, where she usually dwelt with her goats, that she was quite unconscious of the great change which had taken place in the country around her, the substitution of civil order for military violence, and the strength gained by the law and its adherents over those who were called in Gaelic song 'the stormy sons of the sword.' Her own diminished consequence and straitened circumstances she indeed felt, but for this the death of MacTavish Mhor was, in her apprehension, a sufficing reason; and she doubted not that she should rise to her former state of importance when Hamish Bean (or Fair-haired James) should be able to wield the arms of his father. If, then, Elspat was repelled rudely when she demanded anything necessary for her wants, or the accommodation of her little flock, by a churlish farmer, her threats of vengeance, obscurely expressed, yet terrible in their tenor, used frequently to extort, through fear of her maledictions, the relief which was denied to her necessities; and the trembling goodwife who gave meal or money to the widow of MacTavish Mhor wished in her heart that the stern old carline had been burnt on the day her husband had his due.

Years thus ran on, and Hamish Bean grew up, not indeed to be of his father's size or strength, but to become an active, high-spirited, fair-haired youth, with a ruddy cheek, an eye like an eagle, and all the agility, if not all the strength, of his formidable father, upon whose history and achievements his mother dwelt, in order to form her son's mind to a similar course of adventures. But the young see the present state of this changeful world more keenly than the old. Much attached to his

mother, and disposed to do all in his power for her support, Hamish yet perceived, when he mixed with the world, that the trade of the cateran was now alike dangerous and discreditable, and that, if he were to emulate his father's prowess, it must be in some other line of warfare, more consonant to the opinions of the present day.

As the faculties of mind and body began to expand, he became more sensible of the precarious nature of his situation, of the erroneous views of his mother, and her ignorance respecting the changes of the society with which she mingled so little. In visiting friends and neighbours, he became aware of the extremely reduced scale to which his parent was limited, and learned that she possessed little or nothing more than the absolute necessaries of life, and that these were sometimes on the point of failing. At times his success in fishing and the chase was able to add something to her subsistence; but he saw no regular means of contributing to her support, unless by stooping to servile labour, which, if he himself could have endured it, would, he knew, have been like a death's-wound to the pride of his mother.

Elspat, meanwhile, saw with surprise that Hamish Bean, although now tall and fit for the field, showed no disposition to enter on his father's scene of action. There was something of the mother at her heart, which prevented her from urging him in plain terms to take the field as a cateran; for the fear occurred of the perils into which the trade must conduct him, and when she would have spoken to him on the subject, it seemed to her heated imagination as if the ghost of her husband arose between them in his bloody tartans, and, laying his finger on his lips, appeared to prohibit the topic. Yet she wondered at what seemed his want of spirit, sighed as she saw him from day to day lounging about in the long-skirted Lowland coat, which the legislature had imposed upon the Gael instead of their own romantic garb, and thought how much nearer he would have resembled her husband had he been clad in the belted plaid and short hose, with his polished arms gleaming at his side.

Besides these subjects for anxiety, Elspat had others arising from the engrossing impetuosity of her temper. Her love of MacTavish Mhor had been qualified by respect, and sometimes even by fear, for the cateran was not the species of man who submits to female government; but over his son she had exerted, at first during childhood, and afterwards in early youth, an imperious authority, which gave her maternal love

a character of jealousy. She could not bear when Hamish, with advancing life, made repeated steps towards independence, absented himself from her cottage at such season, and for such length of time, as he chose, and seemed to consider, although maintaining towards her every possible degree of respect and kindness, that the control and responsibility of his actions rested on himself alone. This would have been of little consequence could she have concealed her feelings within her own bosom; but the ardour and impatience of her passions made her frequently show her son that she conceived herself neglected and ill-used. When he was absent for any length of time from her cottage, without giving intimation of his purpose, her resentment on his return used to be so unreasonable, that it naturally suggested to a young man fond of independence, and desirous to amend his situation in the world, to leave her, even for the very purpose of enabling him to provide for the parent whose egotistical demands on his filial attention tended to confine him to a desert, in which both were starving in hopeless and helpless indigence.

Upon one occasion, the son having been guilty of some independent excursion, by which the mother felt herself affronted and disobliged, she had been more than usually violent on his return, and awakened in Hamish a sense of displeasure, which clouded his brow and cheek. At length, as she persevered in her unreasonable resentment, his patience became exhausted, and, taking his gun from the chimney-corner, and muttering to himself the reply which his respect for his mother prevented him from speaking aloud, he was about to leave the hut which he had but barely entered.

'Hamish,' said his mother, 'are you again about to leave me?'

But Hamish only replied by looking at and rubbing the lock of his gun.

'Ay, rub the lock of your gun,' said his parent, bitterly; 'I am glad you have courage enough to fire it, though it be but at a roe-deer.'

Hamish started at this undeserved taunt, and cast a look of anger at her in reply.

She saw that she had found the means of giving him pain. 'Yes,' she said, 'look fierce as you will at an old woman, and your mother; it would be long ere you bent your brow on the angry countenance of a bearded man.'

'Be silent, mother, or speak of what you understand,' said

Hamish, much irritated, 'and that is of the distaff and the spindle.'

'And was it of spindle and distaff that I was thinking when I bore you away on my back, through the fire of six of the Saxon soldiers, and you a wailing child? I tell you, Hamish, I know a hundredfold more of swords and guns than ever you will; and you will never learn so much of noble war by yourself as you have seen when you were wrapped up in my plaid.'

'You are determined at least to allow me no peace at home, mother; but this shall have an end,' said Hamish, as, resuming his purpose of leaving the hut, he rose and went towards the door.

'Stay, I command you,' said his mother — 'stay! or may the gun you carry be the means of your ruin — may the road you are going be the track of your funeral!'

'What makes you use such words, mother?' said the young man, turning a little back; 'they are not good, and good cannot come of them. Farewell just now, we are too angry to speak together — farewell; it will be long ere you see me again.' And he departed, his mother, in the first burst of her impatience, showering after him her maledictions, and in the next invoking them on her own head, so that they might spare her son's. She passed that day and the next in all the vehemence of impotent and yet unrestrained passion, now entreating Heaven, and such powers as were familiar to her by rude tradition, to restore her dear son, 'the calf of her heart'; now in impatient resentment, meditating with what bitter terms she should rebuke his filial disobedience upon his return; and now studying the most tender language to attach him to the cottage, which, when her boy was present, she would not, in the rapture of her affection, have exchanged for the apartments of Taymouth Castle.

Two days passed, during which, neglecting even the slender means of supporting nature which her situation afforded, nothing but the strength of a frame accustomed to hardships and privations of every kind could have kept her in existence, notwithstanding the anguish of her mind prevented her being sensible of her personal weakness. Her dwelling, at this period, was the same cottage near which I had found her, but then more habitable by the exertions of Hamish, by whom it had been in a great measure built and repaired.

It was on the third day after her son had disappeared, as she sat at the door rocking herself, after the fashion of her

countrywomen when in distress or in pain, that the then unwonted circumstance occurred of a passenger being seen on the highroad above the cottage. She cast but one glance at him; he was on horseback, so that it could not be Hamish, and Elspat cared not enough for any other being on earth to make her turn her eyes towards him a second time.

The stranger, however, paused opposite to her cottage, and dismounting from his pony, led it down the steep and broken path which conducted to her door.

'God bless you, Elspat MacTavish!' She looked at the man, as he addressed her in her native language, with the displeased air of one whose reverie is interrupted; but the traveller went on to say, 'I bring you tidings of your son Hamish.' At once, from being the most uninteresting object, in respect to Elspat, that could exist, the form of the stranger became awful in her eyes, as that of a messenger descended from Heaven, expressly to pronounce upon her death or life. She started from her seat, and with hands convulsively clasped together, and held up to Heaven, eyes fixed on the stranger's countenance, and person stooping forward to him, she looked those inquiries which her faltering tongue could not articulate. 'Your son sends you his dutiful remembrance and this,' said the messenger, putting into Elspat's hand a small purse containing four or five dollars.

'He is gone — he is gone!' exclaimed Elspat: 'he has sold himself to be the servant of the Saxons, and I shall never more behold him! Tell me, Miles MacPhadraick, for now I know you, is it the price of the son's blood that you have put into the mother's hand?'

'Now, God forbid!' answered MacPhadraick, who was a tacksman, and had possession of a considerable tract of ground under his chief, a proprietor who lived about twenty miles off — 'God forbid I should do wrong, or say wrong, to you, or to the son of MacTavish Mhor! I swear to you by the hand of my chief that your son is well, and will soon see you; and the rest he will tell you himself.' So saying, MacPhadraick hastened back up the pathway, gained the road, mounted his pony, and rode upon his way.

CHAPTER III

ELSPAT MACTAVISH remained gazing on the money, as if the impress of the coin could have conveyed information how it was procured.

'I love not this MacPhadraick,' she said to herself; 'it was his race of whom the bard hath spoken, saying, "Fear them not when their words are loud as the winter's wind, but fear them when they fall on you like the sound of the thrush's song." And yet this riddle can be read but one way: my son hath taken the sword, to win that with strength like a man which churls would keep him from with the words that frighten children.' This idea, when once it occurred to her, seemed the more reasonable, that MacPhadraick, as she well knew, himself a cautious man, had so far encouraged her husband's practices as occasionally to buy cattle of MacTavish, although he must have well known how they were come by, taking care, however, that the transaction was so made as to be accompanied with great profit and absolute safety. Who so likely as MacPhadraick to indicate to a young cateran the glen in which he could commence his perilous trade with most prospect of success, who so likely to convert his booty into money? The feelings which another might have experienced on believing that an only son had rushed forward on the same path in which his father had perished were scarce known to the Highland mothers of that day. She thought of the death of MacTavish Mhor as that of a hero who had fallen in his proper trade of war, and who had not fallen unavenged. She feared less for her son's life than for his dishonour. She dreaded on his account the subjection to strangers, and the death-sleep of the soul which is brought on by what she regarded as slavery.

The moral principle which so naturally and so justly occurs to the mind of those who have been educated under a settled government of laws, that protect the property of the weak against the incursions of the strong, was to poor Elspat a book

sealed and a fountain closed. She had been taught to consider those whom they called Saxons as a race with whom the Gael were constantly at war, and she regarded every settlement of theirs within the reach of Highland incursion as affording a legitimate object of attack and plunder. Her feelings on this point had been strengthened and confirmed, not only by the desire of revenge for the death of her husband, but by the sense of general indignation entertained, not unjustly, through the Highlands of Scotland on account of the barbarous and violent conduct of the victors after the battle of Culloden. Other Highland clans, too, she regarded as the fair objects of plunder when that was possible, upon the score of ancient enmities and deadly feuds.

The prudence that might have weighed the slender means which the times afforded for resisting the efforts of a combined government, which had, in its less compact and established authority, been unable to put down the ravages of such lawless caterans as MacTavish Mhor, was unknown to a solitary woman, whose ideas still dwelt upon her own early times. She imagined that her son had only to proclaim himself his father's successor in adventure and enterprise, and that a force of men as gallant as those who had followed his father's banner would crowd around to support it when again displayed. To her, Hamish was the eagle who had only to soar aloft and resume his native place in the skies, without her being able to comprehend how many additional eyes would have watched his flight, how many additional bullets would have been directed at his bosom. To be brief, Elspat was one who viewed the present state of society with the same feelings with which she regarded the times that had passed away. She had been indigent, neglected, oppressed, since the days that her husband had no longer been feared and powerful, and she thought that the term of her ascendence would return when her son had determined to play the part of his father. If she permitted her eye to glance farther into futurity, it was but to anticipate that she must be for many a day cold in the grave, with the coronach of her tribe cried duly over her, before her fair-haired Hamish could, according to her calculation, die with his hand on the basket-hilt of the red claymore. His father's hair was grey ere, after a hundred dangers, he had fallen with his arms in his hands. That she should have seen and survived the sight was a natural consequence of the manners of that age. And better it was, such was her proud thought, that she had seen him so die

than to have witnessed his departure from life in a smoky hovel, on a bed of rotten straw, like an over-worn hound, or a bullock which died of disease. But the hour of her young — her brave Hamish was yet far distant. He must succeed — he must conquer, like his father. And when he fell at length, for she anticipated for him no bloodless death, Elspat would ere then have lain long in the grave, and could neither see his death-struggle nor mourn over his grave-sod.

With such wild notions working in her brain, the spirit of Elspat rose to its usual pitch, or rather to one which seemed higher. In the emphatic language of Scripture, which in that idiom does not greatly differ from her own, she arose, she washed and changed her apparel, and ate bread, and was refreshed.

She longed eagerly for the return of her son, but she now longed not with the bitter anxiety of doubt and apprehension. She said to herself, that much must be done ere he could in these times arise to be an eminent and dreaded leader. Yet when she saw him again, she almost expected him at the head of a daring band, with pipes playing, and banners flying, the noble tartans fluttering free in the wind, in despite of the laws which had suppressed, under severe penalties, the use of the national garb, and all the appurtenances of Highland chivalry. For all this, her eager imagination was content only to allow the interval of some days.

From the moment this opinion had taken deep and serious possession of her mind, her thoughts were bent upon receiving her son at the head of his adherents in the manner in which she used to adorn her hut for the return of his father.

The substantial means of subsistence she had not the power of providing, nor did she consider that of importance. The successful caterans would bring with them herds and flocks. But the interior of her hut was arranged for their reception; the usquebaugh was brewed or distilled in a larger quantity than it could have been supposed one lone woman could have made ready. Her hut was put into such order as might, in some degree, give it the appearance of a day of rejoicing. It was swept and decorated with boughs of various kinds, like the house of a Jewess, upon what is termed the Feast of the Tabernacles. The produce of the milk of her little flock was prepared in as great variety of forms as her skill admitted, to entertain her son and his associates whom she expected to receive along with him.

But the principal decoration, which she sought with the greatest toil, was the cloudberry, a scarlet fruit, which is only found on very high hills, and there only in small quantities. Her husband, or perhaps one of his forefathers, had chosen this as the emblem of his family, because it seemed at once to imply by its scarcity the smallness of their clan, and by the places in which it was found the ambitious height of their pretensions.

For the time that these simple preparations of welcome endured, Elspat was in a state of troubled happiness. In fact, her only anxiety was that she might be able to complete all that she could do to welcome Hamish and the friends who she supposed must have attached themselves to his band before they should arrive, and find her unprovided for their reception.

But when such efforts as she could make had been accomplished, she once more had nothing left to engage her save the trifling care of her goats; and when these had been attended to, she had only to review her little preparations, renew such as were of a transitory nature, replace decayed branches and fading boughs, and then to sit down at her cottage door and watch the road, as it ascended on the one side from the banks of the Awe, and on the other wound round the heights of the mountain, with such a degree of accommodation to hill and level as the plan of the military engineer permitted. While so occupied, her imagination, anticipating the future from recollections of the past, formed out of the morning mist or the evening cloud the wild forms of an advancing band, which were then called 'sidier dhu' (dark soldiers), dressed in their native tartan, and so named to distinguish them from the scarlet ranks of the British army. In this occupation she spent many hours of each morning and evening.

CHAPTER IV

IT was in vain that Elspat's eyes surveyed the distant path, by the earliest light of the dawn and the latest glimmer of the twilight. No rising dust awakened the expectation of nodding plumes or flashing arms; the solitary traveller trudged listlessly along in his brown Lowland greatcoat, his tartans dyed black or purple, to comply with or evade the law which prohibited their being worn in their variegated hues. The spirit of the Gael, sunk and broken by the severe though perhaps necessary laws that proscribed the dress and arms which he considered as his birthright, was intimated by his drooping head and dejected appearance. Not in such depressed wanderers did Elspat recognise the light and free step of her son, now, as she concluded, regenerated from every sign of Saxon thraldom. Night by night, as darkness came, she removed from her unclosed door to throw herself on her restless pallet, not to sleep, but to watch. 'The brave and the terrible,' she said, 'walk by night: their steps are heard in darkness, when all is silent save the whirlwind and the cataract; the timid deer comes only forth when the sun is upon the mountain's peak, but the bold wolf walks in the red light of the harvest-moon.' She reasoned in vain: her son's expected summons did not call her from the lowly couch where she lay dreaming of his approach. Hamish came not.

'Hope deferred,' saith the royal sage, 'maketh the heart sick'; and, strong as was Elspat's constitution, she began to experience that it was unequal to the toils to which her anxious and immoderate affection subjected her, when early one morning the appearance of a traveller on the lonely mountain-road revived hopes which had begun to sink into listless despair. There was no sign of Saxon subjugation about the stranger. At a distance she could see the flutter of the belted plaid that drooped in graceful folds behind him, and the plume that, placed in the bonnet, showed rank and gentle birth. The

carried a gun over his shoulder, the claymore was swinging by his side, with its usual appendages, the dirk, the pistol, and the *sporran mollach*. Ere yet her eye had scanned all these particulars, the light step of the traveller was hastened, his arm was waved in token of recognition; a moment more, and Elspat held in her arms her darling son, dressed in the garb of his ancestors, and looking, in her maternal eyes, the fairest among ten thousand!

The first outpouring of affection it would be impossible to describe. Blessings mingled with the most endearing epithets which her energetic language affords, in striving to express the wild rapture of Elspat's joy. Her board was heaped hastily with all she had to offer; and the mother watched the young soldier, as he partook of the refreshment, with feelings how similar to, yet how different from, those with which she had seen him draw his first sustenance from her bosom!

When the tumult of joy was appeased, Elspat became anxious to know her son's adventures since they parted, and could not help greatly censuring his rashness for traversing the hills in the Highland dress in the broad sunshine, when the penalty was so heavy, and so many red soldiers were abroad in the country.

'Fear not for me, mother,' said Hamish, in a tone designed to relieve her anxiety, and yet somewhat embarrassed; 'I may wear the *breacan* at the gate of Fort-Augustus, if I like it.'

'Oh, be not too daring, my beloved Hamish, though it be the fault which best becomes thy father's son — yet be not too daring! Alas! they fight not now as in former days, with fair weapons and on equal terms, but take odds of numbers and of arms, so that the feeble and the strong are alike levelled by the shot of a boy. And do not think me unworthy to be called your father's widow, and your mother, because I speak thus; for God knoweth that, man to man, I would peril thee against the best in Breadalbane and broad Lorn besides.'

'I assure you, my dearest mother,' replied Hamish, 'that I am in no danger. But have you seen MacPhadraick, mother, and what has he said to you on my account?'

'Silver he left me in plenty, Hamish; but the best of his comfort was, that you were well, and would see me soon. But beware of MacPhadraick, my son; for when he called himself the friend of your father, he better loved the most worthless stirk in his herd than he did the life-blood of MacTavish Mhor.

Use his services, therefore, and pay him for them; for it is thus we should deal with the unworthy. But take my counsel, and trust him not.'

Hamish could not suppress a sigh, which seemed to Elspat to intimate that the caution came too late. 'What have you done with him?' she continued, eager and alarmed. 'I have had money of him, and he gives not that without value: he is none of those who exchange barley for chaff. Oh, if you repent you of your bargain, and if it be one which you may break off without disgrace to your truth or your manhood, take back his silver, and trust not to his fair words.'

'It may not be, mother,' said Hamish; 'I do not repent my engagement, unless that it must make me leave you soon.'

'Leave me! how leave me? Silly boy, think you I know not what duty belongs to the wife or mother of a daring man? Thou art but a boy yet; and when thy father had been the dread of the country for twenty years, he did not despise my company and assistance, but often said my help was worth that of two strong gillies.'

'It is not on that score, mother; but since I must leave the country ——'

'Leave the country!' replied his mother, interrupting him; 'and think you that I am like a bush, that is rooted to the soil where it grows, and must die if carried elsewhere? I have breathed other winds than these of Ben Cruachan. I have followed your father to the wilds of Ross and the impenetrable deserts of Y Mac Y Mhor. Tush, man, my limbs, old as they are, will bear me as far as your young feet can trace the way.'

'Alas, mother,' said the young man, with a faltering accent, 'but to cross the sea ——'

'The sea! Who am I that I should fear the sea? Have I never been in a birling in my life — never known the Sound of Mull, the Isles of Treshornish, and the rough rocks of Harris?'

'Alas, mother, I go far, far from all of these. I am enlisted in one of the new regiments, and we go against the French in America.'

'Enlisted!' uttered the astonished mother — 'against *my* will — without *my* consent? You could not — you would not' — then rising up, and assuming a posture of almost imperial command, 'Hamish, you DARED not!'

'Despair, mother, dares everything,' answered Hamish, in a tone of melancholy resolution. 'What should I do here, where

I can scarce get bread for myself and you, and when the times are growing daily worse? Would you but sit down and listen, I would convince you I have acted for the best.'

With a bitter smile Elspat sat down, and the same severe, ironical expression was on her features as, with her lips firmly closed, she listened to his vindication.

Hamish went on, without being disconcerted by her expected displeasure. 'When I left you, dearest mother, it was to go to MacPhadraick's house; for, although I knew he is crafty and worldly, after the fashion of the Sassenach, yet he is wise, and I thought how he would teach me, as it would cost him nothing, in which way I could mend our estate in the world.'

'Our estate in the world!' said Elspat, losing patience at the word; 'and went you to a base fellow with a soul no better than that of a cowherd to ask counsel about your conduct? Your father asked none, save of his courage and his sword.'

'Dearest mother,' answered Hamish, 'how shall I convince you that you live in this land of our fathers as if our fathers were yet living? You walk as it were in a dream, surrounded by the phantoms of those who have been long with the dead. When my father lived and fought, the great respected the man of the strong right hand, and the rich feared him. He had protection from MacCallan Mhor and from Caberfae,[1] and tribute from meaner men. That is ended, and his son would only earn a disgraceful and unpitied death by the practices which gave his father credit and power among those who wear the breacan. The land is conquered, its lights are quenched — Glengarry, Lochiel, Perth, Lord Lovis, all the high chiefs, are dead or in exile. We may mourn for it, but we cannot help it. Bonnet, broadsword, and sporran, power, strength, and wealth, were all lost on Drummossie Muir.'[2]

'It is false!' said Elspat, fiercely; 'you, and such-like dastardly spirits, are quelled by your own faint hearts, not by the strength of the enemy: you are like the fearful waterfowl, to whom the least cloud in the sky seems the shadow of the eagle.'

'Mother,' said Hamish, proudly, 'lay not faint heart to my charge. I go where men are wanted who have strong arms and bold hearts too. I leave a desert for a land where I may gather fame.'

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[1] Caberfae — *Anglicè*, the Stag's-head, the Celtic designation for the arms of the family of the high chief of Seaforth.

[2] The battlefield of Culloden (*Laing*).

'And you leave your mother to perish in want, age, and solitude,' said Elspat, essaying successively every means of moving a resolution which she began to see was more deeply rooted than she had at first thought.

'Not so, neither,' he answered; 'I leave you to comfort and certainty, which you have yet never known. Barcaldine's son is made a leader, and with him I have enrolled myself; MacPhadraick acts for him, and raises men, and finds his own in doing it.'

'That is the truest word of the tale, were all the rest as false as hell,' said the old woman, bitterly.

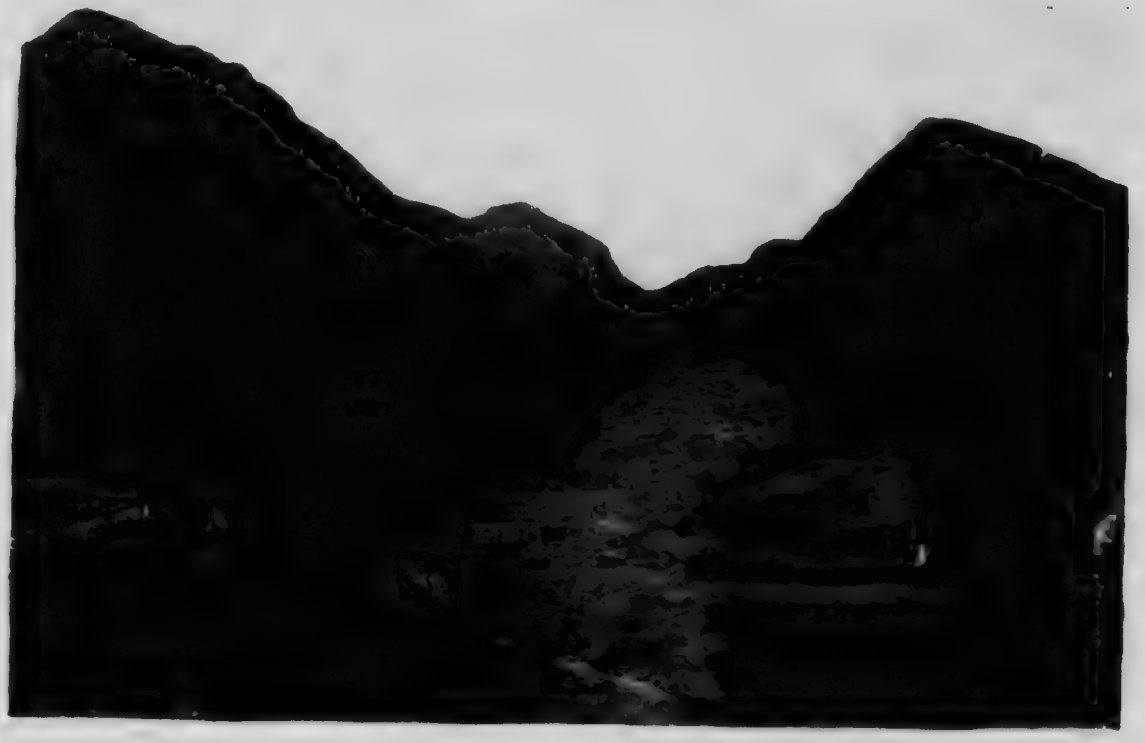
'But we are to find our good in it also,' continued Hamish; 'for Barcaldine is to give you a shieling in his wood of Letterfindreight, with grass for your goats, and a cow, when you please to have one, on the common; and my own pay, dearest mother, though I am far away, will do more than provide you with meal, and with all else you can want. Do not fear for me. I enter a private gentleman; but I will return, if hard fighting and regular duty can deserve it, an officer, and with half a dollar a-day.'

'Poor child!' replied Elspat, in a tone of pity mingled with contempt, 'and you trust MacPhadraick?'

'I might, mother,' said Hamish, the dark red colour of his race crossing his forehead and cheeks, 'for MacPhadraick knows the blood which flows in my veins, and is aware that, should he break trust with you, he might count the days which could bring Hamish back to Breadalbane, and number those of his life within three suns more. I would kill him at his own hearth, did he break his word with me — I would, by the great Being who made us both!'

The look and attitude of the young soldier for a moment overawed Elspat; she was unused to see him express a deep and bitter mood, which reminded her so strongly of his father, but she resumed her remonstrances in the same taunting manner in which she had commenced them.

'Poor boy!' she said; 'and you think that at the distance of half the world your threats will be heard or thought of! But, go — go — place your neck under him of Ianover's yoke, against whom every true Gael fought to the death. Go, disown the royal Stuart, for whom your father, and his fathers, and your mother's fathers, have crimsoned many a field with their blood. Go, put your head under the belt of one of the race of Dermid, whose children murdered —— Yes,' she added, with a



GLENCOE: SCENE OF THE MASSACRE.

wild shriek, 'murdered your mother's fathers in their peaceful dwellings in Glencoe! Yes,' she again exclaimed, with a wilder and shriller scream, 'I was then unborn, but my mother has told me, and I attended to the voice of *my* mother — well I remember her words! They came in peace, and were received in friendship, and blood and fire arose, and screams and murder!'[1]

'Mother,' answered Hamish, mournfully, but with a decided tone, 'all that I have thought over; there is not a drop of the blood of Glencoe on the noble hand of Barcaldine — with the unhappy house of Glenlyon the curse remains, and on them God hath avenged it.'

'You speak like the Saxon priest already,' replied his mother; 'will you not better stay, and ask a kirk from MacCallan Mhor, that you may preach forgiveness to the race of Dermid?'

'Yesterday was yesterday,' answered Hamish, 'and to-day is to-day. When the clans are crushed and confounded together, it is well and wise that their hatreds and their feuds should not survive their independence and their power. He that cannot execute vengeance like a man should not harbour useless enmity like a craven. Mother, young Barcaldine is true and brave; I know that MacPhadraick counselled him that he should not let me take leave of you, lest you dissuaded me from my purpose; but he said, "Hamish MacTavish is the son of a brave man, and he will not break his word." Mother, Barcaldine leads an hundred of the bravest of the sons of the Gael in their native dress, and with their fathers' arms, heart to heart, shoulder to shoulder. I have sworn to go with him. He has trusted me, and I will trust him.'

At this reply, so firmly and resolvedly pronounced, Elspat remained like one thunderstruck and sunk in despair. The arguments which she had considered so irresistibly conclusive had recoiled like a wave from a rock. After a long pause, she filled her son's quaigh, and presented it to him with an air of dejected deference and submission.

'Drink,' she said, 'to thy father's roof-tree ere you leave it for ever; and tell me, since the chains of a new king, and of a new chief, whom your fathers knew not save as mortal enemies, are fastened upon the limbs of your father's son — tell me how many links you count upon them?'

Hamish took the cup, but looked at her as if uncertain of

[1] See Massacre of Glencoe. Note 28.

her meaning. She proceeded in a raised voice. 'Tell me,' she said, 'for I have a right to know, for how many days the will of those you have made your masters permits me to look upon you? In other words, how many are the days of my life; for, when you leave me, the earth has nought besides worth living for.'

'Mother,' replied Hamish MacTavish, 'for six days I may remain with you, and if you will set out with me on the fifth, I will conduct you in safety to your new dwelling. But if you remain here, then I will depart on the seventh by daybreak; then, as at the last moment, I MUST set out for Dunbarton, for if I appear not on the eighth day, I am subject to punishment as a deserter, and am dishonoured as a soldier and a gentleman.'

'Your father's foot,' she answered, 'was free as the wind on the heath; it were as vain to say to him "Where goest thou?" as to ask that viewless driver of the clouds, "Wherefore blowest thou?" Tell me under what penalty thou must — since go thou must and go thou wilt — return to thy thraldom?'

'Call it not thraldom, mother; it is the service of an honourable soldier — the only service which is now open to the son of MacTavish Mhor.'

'Yet say what is the penalty if thou shouldst not return?' replied Elspat.

'Military punishment as a deserter,' answered Hamish, writhing, however, as his mother failed not to observe, under some internal feelings, which she resolved to probe to the uttermost.

'And that,' she said, with assumed calmness, which her glancing eye disowned, 'is the punishment of a disobedient hound, is it not?'

'Ask me no more, mother,' said Hamish; 'the punishment is nothing to one who will never deserve it.'

'To me it is something,' replied Elspat, 'since I know better than thou that, where there is power to inflict, there is often the will to do so without cause. I would pray for thee, Hamish, and I must know against what evils I should beseech Him who leaves none unguarded to protect thy youth and simplicity.'

'Mother,' said Hamish, 'it signifies little to what a criminal may be exposed, if a man is determined not to be such. Our Highland chiefs used also to punish their vassals, and, as I have heard, severely. Was it not Lachlan MacIan, whom we

remember of old, whose head was struck off by order of his chieftain for shooting at the stag before him?'

'Ay,' said Elspat, 'and right he had to lose it, since he dishonoured the father of the people even in the face of the assembled clan. But the chiefs were noble in their ire: they punished with the sharp blade, and not with the baton. Their punishments drew blood, but they did not infer dishonour. Canst thou say the same for the laws under whose yoke thou hast placed thy freeborn neck?'

'I cannot, mother — I cannot,' said Hamish, mournfully. 'I saw them punish a Sassenach for deserting, as they called it, his banner. He was scourged, I own it — scourged like a hound who has offended an imperious master. I was sick at the sight, I confess it. But the punishment of dogs is only for those worse than dogs, who know not how to keep their faith.'

'To this infamy, however, thou hast subjected thyself, Hamish,' replied Elspat, 'if thou shouldst give, or thy officers take, measure of offence against thee. I speak no more to thee on thy purpose. Were the sixth day from this morning's sun my dying day, and thou wert to stay to close mine eyes, thou wouldst run the risk of being lashed like a dog at a post — yes! unless thou hadst the gallant heart to leave me to die alone, and upon my desolate hearth, the last spark of thy father's fire and of thy forsaken mother's life to be extinguished together!'

Hamish traversed the hut with an impatient and angry pace. 'Mother,' he said at length, 'concern not yourself about such things. I cannot be subjected to such infamy, for never will I deserve it; and were I threatened with it, I should know how to die before I was so far dishonoured.'

'There spoke the son of the husband of my heart!' replied Elspat; and she changed the discourse, and seemed to listen in melancholy acquiescence when her son reminded her how short the time was which they were permitted to pass in each other's society, and entreated that it might be spent without useless and unpleasant recollections respecting the circumstances under which they must soon be separated.

Elspat was now satisfied that her son, with some of his father's other properties, preserved the haughty masculine spirit which rendered it impossible to divert him from a resolution which he had deliberately adopted. She assumed, therefore, an exterior of apparent submission to their inevitable separa-

tion; and if she now and then broke out into complaints and murmurs, it was either that she could not altogether suppress the natural impetuosity of her temper, or because she had the wit to consider that a total and unreserved acquiescence might have seemed to her son constrained and suspicious, and induced him to watch and defeat the means by which she still hoped to prevent his leaving her. Her ardent, though selfish, affection for her son, incapable of being qualified by a regard for the true interests of the unfortunate object of her attachment, resembled the instinctive fondness of the animal race for their offspring; and diving little farther into futurity than one of the inferior creatures, she only felt that to be separated from Hamish was to die.

In the brief interval permitted them, Elspat exhausted every art which affection could devise to render agreeable to him the space which they were apparently to spend with each other. Her memory carried her far back into former days, and her stores of legendary history, which furnish at all times a principal amusement of the Highlander in his moments of repose, were augmented by an unusual acquaintance with the songs of ancient bards, and traditions of the most approved seannachies and tellers of tales. Her officious attentions to her son's accommodation, indeed, were so unremitted as almost to give him pain; and he endeavoured quietly to prevent her from taking so much personal toil in selecting the blooming heath for his bed, or preparing the meal for his refreshment. 'Let me alone, Hamish,' she would reply on such occasions; 'you follow your own will in departing from your mother, let your mother have hers in doing what gives her pleasure while you remain.'

So much she seemed to be reconciled to the arrangements which he had made in her behalf, that she could hear him speak to her of her removing to the lands of Green Colin, as the gentleman was called on whose estate he had provided her an asylum. In truth, however, nothing could be farther from her thoughts. From what he had said during their first violent dispute, Elspat had gathered that, if Hamish returned not by the appointed time permitted by his furlough, he would incur the hazard of corporal punishment. Were he placed within the risk of being thus dishonoured, she was well aware that he would never submit to the disgrace, by a return to the regiment where it might be inflicted. Whether she looked to any farther probable consequences of her unhappy scheme cannot be known;

but the partner of MacTavish Mhor, in all his perils and wanderings, was familiar with an hundred instances of resistance or escape, by which one brave man, amidst a land of rocks, lakes, and mountains, dangerous passes, and dark forests, might baffle the pursuit of hundreds. For the future, therefore, she feared nothing; her sole engrossing object was to prevent her son from keeping his word with his commanding-officer.

With this secret purpose, she evaded the proposal which Hamish repeatedly made, that they should set out together to take possession of her new abode; and she resisted it upon grounds apparently so natural to her character that her son was neither alarmed nor displeased. 'Let me not,' she said, 'in the same short week, bid farewell to my only son and to the glen in which I have so long dwelt. Let my eye, when dimmed with weeping for thee, still look around, for a while at least, upon Loch Awe and on Ben Cruachan.'

Hamish yielded the more willingly to his mother's humour in this particular, that one or two persons who resided in a neighbouring glen, and had given their sons to Barcaldine's levy, were also to be provided for on the estate of the chieftain, and it was apparently settled that Elspat was to take her journey along with them when they should remove to their new residence. Thus, Hamish believed that he had at once indulged his mother's humour and ensured her safety and accommodation. But she nourished in her mind very different thoughts and projects!

The period of Hamish's leave of absence was fast approaching, and more than once he proposed to depart, in such time as to ensure his gaining easily and early Dunbarton, the town where were the headquarters of his regiment. But still his mother's entreaties, his own natural disposition to linger among scenes long dear to him, and, above all, his firm reliance in his speed and activity, induced him to protract his departure till the sixth day, being the very last which he could possibly afford to spend with his mother, if indeed he meant to comply with the conditions of his furlough.

CHAPTER V

But for your son, believe it — oh, believe it —
Most dangerously you have with him prevailed,
If not most mortal to him.

Coriolanus.

ON the evening which preceded his proposed departure, Hamish walked down to the river with his fishing-rod, to practise in the Awe, for the last time, a sport in which he excelled, and to find, at the same time, the means for making one social meal with his mother on something better than their ordinary cheer. He was as successful as usual, and soon killed a fine salmon. On his return homeward an incident befell him, which he afterwards related as ominous, though probably his heated imagination, joined to the universal turn of his countrymen for the marvellous, exaggerated into superstitious importance some very ordinary and accidental circumstance.

In the path which he pursued homeward, he was surprised to observe a person, who, like himself, was dressed and armed after the old Highland fashion. The first idea that struck him was, that the passenger belonged to his own corps, who, levied by government, and bearing arms under royal authority, were not amenable for breach of the statutes against the use of the Highland garb or weapons. But he was struck on perceiving, as he mended his pace to make up to his supposed comrade, meaning to request his company for the next day's journey, that the stranger wore a white cockade, the fatal badge which was proscribed in the Highlands. The stature of the man was tall, and there was something shadowy in the outline, which added to his size; and his mode of motion, which rather resembled gliding than walking, impressed Hamish with superstitious fears concerning the character of the being which thus passed before him in the twilight. He no longer strove to make up to the stranger, but contented himself with keeping him in view, under the superstition common to the Highlanders,

that you ought neither to intrude yourself on such supernatural apparitions as you may witness, nor avoid their presence, but leave it to themselves to withhold or extend their communication, as their power may permit, or the purpose of their commission require.

Upon an elevated knoll by the side of the road, just where the pathway turned down to Elspat's hut, the stranger made a pause, and seemed to await Hamish's coming up. Hamish, on his part, seeing it was necessary he should pass the object of his suspicion, mustered up his courage, and approached the spot where the stranger had placed himself, who first pointed to Elspat's hut, and made, with arm and head, a gesture prohibiting Hamish to approach it, then stretched his hand to the road which led to the southward, with a motion which seemed to enjoin his instant departure in that direction. In a moment afterwards the plaided form was gone — Hamish did not exactly say vanished, because there were rocks and stunted trees enough to have concealed him; but it was his own opinion that he had seen the spirit of MacTavish Mhor, warning him to commence his instant journey to Dunbarton, without waiting till morning, or again visiting his mother's hut.

In fact, so many accidents might arise to delay his journey, especially where there were many ferries, that it became his settled purpose, though he could not depart without bidding his mother adieu, that he neither could nor would abide longer than for that object; and that the first glimpse of next day's sun should see him many miles advanced towards Dunbarton. He descended the path, therefore, and entering the cottage, he communicated, in a hasty and troubled voice, which indicated mental agitation, his determination to take his instant departure. Somewhat to his surprise, Elspat appeared not to combat his purpose, but she urged him to take some refreshment ere he left her for ever. He did so hastily, and in silence, thinking on the approaching separation, and scarce yet believing it would take place without a final struggle with his mother's fondness. To his surprise, she filled the quaigh with liquor for his parting cup.

'Go,' she said, 'my son, since such is thy settled purpose; but first stand once more on thy mother's hearth, the flame on which will be extinguished long ere thy foot shall again be placed there.'

'To your health, mother!' said Hamish, 'and may we meet again in happiness, in spite of your ominous words.'

'It were better not to part,' said his mother, watching him as he quaffed the liquor, of which he would have held it ominous to have left a drop.

'And now,' she said, muttering the words to herself, 'go — if thou canst go.'

'Mother,' said Hamish, as he replaced on the table the empty quaigh, 'thy drink is pleasant to the taste, but it takes away the strength which it ought to give.'

'Such is its first effect, my son,' replied Elspat; 'but lie down upon that soft heather couch, shut your eyes but for a moment, and, in the sleep of an hour, you shall have more refreshment than in the ordinary repose of three whole nights, could they be blended into one.'

'Mother,' said Hamish, upon whose brain the potion was now taking rapid effect, 'give me my bonnet, I must kiss you and begone; yet it seems as if my feet were nailed to the floor.'

'Indeed,' said his mother, 'you will be instantly well, if you will sit down for half an hour — but half an hour; it is eight hours to dawn, and dawn were time enough for your father's son to begin such a journey.'

'I must obey you, mother — I feel I must,' said Hamish, inarticulately; 'but call me when the moon rises.'

He sat down on the bed, reclined back, and almost instantly was fast asleep. With the throbbing glee of one who has brought to an end a difficult and troublesome enterprise, Elspat proceeded tenderly to arrange the plaid of the unconscious slumberer, to whom her extravagant affection was doomed to be so fatal, expressing, while busied in her office, her delight in tones of mingled tenderness and triumph. 'Yes,' she said, 'calf of my heart, the moon shall arise and set to thee, and so shall the sun; but not to light thee from the land of thy fathers, or tempt thee to serve the foreign prince or the feudal enemy. To no son of Dermid shall I be delivered, to be led like a bondswoman; but he who is my pleasure and my pride shall be my guard and my protector. They say the Highlands are changed; but I see Ben Cruachan rear his crest as high as ever into the evening sky, no one hath yet herded his kine on the depth of Loch Awe, and yonder oak does not yet bend like a willow. The children of the mountains will be such as their fathers, until the mountains themselves shall be levelled with the strath. In these wild forests, which used to support thousands of the brave, there is still surely subsistence and

refuge left for one aged woman and one gallant youth, of the ancient race and the ancient manners.'

While the misjudging mother thus exulted in the success of her stratagem, we may mention to the reader, that it was founded on the acquaintance with drugs and simples which Elspat, accomplished in all things belonging to the wild life which she had led, possessed in an uncommon degree, and which she exercised for various purposes. With the herbs, which she knew how to select as well as how to distil, she could relieve more diseases than a regular medical person could easily believe. She applied some to dye the bright colours of the tartan, from others she compounded draughts of various powers, and unhappily possessed the secret of one which was strongly soporific. Upon the effects of this last concoction, as the reader doubtless has anticipated, she reckoned with security on delaying Hamish beyond the period for which his return was appointed; and she trusted to his horror for the apprehended punishment to which he was thus rendered liable to prevent him from returning at all.

Sound and deep, beyond natural rest, was the sleep of Hamish MacTavish on that eventful evening, but not such the repose of his mother. Scarce did she close her eyes from time to time, but she awakened again with a start, in the terror that her son had arisen and departed; and it was only on approaching his couch, and hearing his deep-drawn and regular breathing, that she reassured herself of the security of the repose in which he was plunged.

Still, dawning, she feared, might awaken him, notwithstanding the unusual strength of the potion with which she had drugged his cup. If there remained a hope of mortal man accomplishing the journey, she was aware that Hamish would attempt it, though he were to die from fatigue upon the road. Animated by this new fear, she studied to exclude the light, by stopping all the crannies and crevices through which, rather than through any regular entrance, the morning beams might find access to her miserable dwelling: and this in order to detain amid its wants and wretchedness the being on whom, if the world itself had been at her disposal, she would have joyfully conferred it.

Her pains were bestowed unnecessarily. The sun rose high above the heavens, and not the fleetest stag in Breadalbane, were the hounds at his heels, could have sped, to save his life, so fast as would have been necessary to keep Hamish's appoint-

ment. Her purpose was fully attained: her son's return within the period assigned was impossible. She deemed it equally impossible that he would ever dream of returning, standing, as he must now do, in the danger of an infamous punishment. By degrees, and at different times, she had gained from him a full acquaintance with the predicament in which he would be placed by failing to appear on the day appointed, and the very small hope he could entertain of being treated with lenity.

It is well known, that the great and wise Earl of Chatham prided himself on the scheme by which he drew together for the defence of the colonies those hardy Highlanders who, until his time, had been the objects of doubt, fear, and suspicion on the part of each successive administration. But some obstacles occurred, from the peculiar habits and temper of this people, to the execution of his patriotic project. By nature and habit, every Highlander was accustomed to the use of arms, but at the same time totally unaccustomed to, and impatient of, the restraints imposed by discipline upon regular troops. They were a species of militia, who had no conception of a camp as their only home. If a battle was lost, they dispersed to save themselves, and look out for the safety of their families: if won, they went back to their glens to hoard up their booty, and attend to their cattle and their farms. This privilege of going and coming at pleasure they would not be deprived of even by their chiefs, whose authority was in most other respects so despotic. It followed as a matter of course that the new-levied Highland recruits could scarce be made to comprehend the nature of a military engagement which compelled a man to serve in the army longer than he pleased; and perhaps, in many instances, sufficient care was not taken at enlisting to explain to them the permanency of the engagement which they came under, lest such a disclosure should induce them to change their mind. Desertions were therefore become numerous from the newly-raised regiment, and the veteran general who commanded at Dunbarton saw no better way of checking them than by causing an unusually severe example to be made of a deserter from an English corps. The young Highland regiment was obliged to attend upon the punishment, which struck a people peculiarly jealous of personal honour with equal horror and disgust, and not unnaturally indisposed some of them to the service. The old general, however, who had been regularly bred in the German wars, stuck to his own opinion, and gave out in orders that the first Highlander who might either desert

or fail to appear at the expiry of his furlough should be brought to the halberds, and punished like the culprit whom they had seen in that condition. No man doubted that General —— would keep his word rigorously whenever severity was required; and Elspat, therefore, knew that her son, when he perceived that due compliance with his orders was impossible, must at the same time consider the degrading punishment denounced against his defection as inevitable, should he place himself within the general's power.[1]

When noon was well passed, new apprehensions came on the mind of the lonely woman. Her son still slept under the influence of the draught; but what if, being stronger than she had ever known it administered, his health or his reason should be affected by its potency? For the first time, likewise, notwithstanding her high ideas on the subject of parental authority, she began to dread the resentment of her son, whom her heart told her she had wronged. Of late, she had observed that his temper was less docile, and his determinations, especially upon this late occasion of his enlistment, independently formed, and then boldly carried through. She remembered the stern wilfulness of his father when he accounted himself ill-used, and began to dread that Hamish, upon finding the deceit she had put upon him, might resent it even to the extent of casting her off, and pursuing his own course through the world alone. Such were the alarming and yet the reasonable apprehensions which began to crowd upon the unfortunate woman, after the apparent success of her ill-advised stratagem.

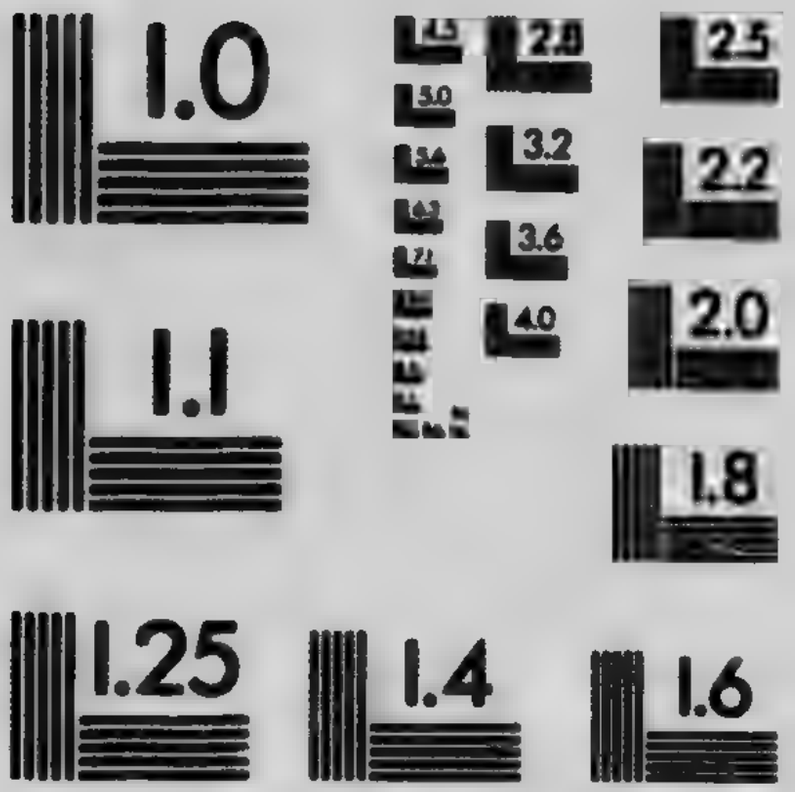
It was near evening when Hamish first awoke, and then he was far from being in the full possession either of his mental or bodily powers. From his vague expressions and disordered pulse, Elspat at first experienced much apprehension; but she used such expedients as her medical knowledge suggested; and in the course of the night she had the satisfaction to see him sink once more into a deep sleep, which probably carried off the greater part of the effects of the drug, for about sunrising she heard him arise and call to her for his bonnet. This she had purposely removed, from a fear that he might awaken and depart in the night-time, without her knowledge.

'My bonnet — my bonnet,' cried Hamish; 'it is time to take farewell. Mother, your drink was too strong. The sun is up; but with the next morning I will still see the double summit of the ancient dun. My bonnet — my bonnet! mother, I must be

[1] See Fidelity of the Highlanders. Note 20.

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



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instant in my departure.' These expressions made it plain that poor Hamish was unconscious that two nights and a day had passed since he had drained the fatal quaigh, and Elspat had now to venture on what she felt as the almost perilous, as well as painful, task of explaining her machinations.

'Forgive me, my son,' she said, approaching Hamish, and taking him by the hand with an air of deferential awe, which perhaps she had not always used to his father, even when in his moody fits.

'Forgive you, mother — for what?' said Hamish, laughing; 'for giving me a dram that was too strong, and which my head still feels this morning, or for hiding my bonnet to keep me an instant longer? Nay, do *you* forgive *me*. Give me the bonnet, and let that be done which now must be done. Give me my bonnet, or I go without it; surely I am not to be delayed by so trifling a want as that — I, who have gone for years with only a strap of deer's hide to tie back my hair. Trifle not, but give it me, or I must go bareheaded, since to stay is impossible.'

'My son,' said Elspat, keeping fast hold of his hand, 'what is done cannot be recalled: could you borrow the wings of yonder eagle, you would arrive at the dun too late for what you purpose — too soon for what awaits you there. You believe you see the sun rising for the first time since you have seen him set, but yesterday beheld him climb Ben Cruachan, though your eyes were closed to his light.'

Hamish cast upon his mother a wild glance of extreme terror, then instantly recovering himself, said, 'I am no child to be cheated out of my purpose by such tricks as these. Farewell, mother, each moment is worth a lifetime.'

'Stay,' she said, 'my dear — my deceived son! rush not on infamy and ruin. Yonder I see the priest upon the highroad on his white horse; ask him the day of the month and week — let him decide between us.'

With the speed of an eagle, Hamish darted up the acclivity, and stood by the minister of Glenorquhy, who was pacing out thus early to administer consolation to a distressed family near Bunawe.

The good man was somewhat startled to behold an armed Highlander, then so unusual a sight, and apparently much agitated, stop his horse by the bridle, and ask him with a faltering voice the day of the week and month. 'Had you been where you should have been yesterday, young man,' replied the clergyman, 'you would have known that it was God's

Sabbath ; and that this is Monday, the second day of the week, and twenty-first of the month.'

'And this is true?' said Hamish.

'As true,' answered the surprised minister 'as that I yesterday preached the Word of God to this parish. What ails you, young man? are you sick? are you in your right mind?'

Hamish made no answer, only repeated to himself the first expression of the clergyman — 'Had you been where you should have been yesterday'; and so saying, he let go the bridle, turned from the road, and descended the path towards the hut, with the look and pace of one who was going to execution. The minister looked after him with surprise; but although he knew the inhabitant of the hovel, the character of Elspat had not invited him to open any communication with her, because she was generally reputed a Papist, or rather one indifferent to all religion, except some superstitious observances which had been handed down from her parents. On Hamish the Reverend Mr. Tyrie had bestowed instructions when he was occasionally thrown in his way, and if the seed fell among the brambles and thorns of a wild and uncultivated disposition, it had not yet been entirely checked or destroyed. There was something so ghastly in the present expression of the youth's features, that the good man was tempted to go down to the hovel, and inquire whether any distress had befallen the inhabitants, in which his presence might be consoling and his ministry useful. Unhappily he did not persevere in this resolution, which might have saved a great misfortune, as he would have probably become a mediator for the unfortunate young man; but a recollection of the wild moods of such Highlanders as had been educated after the old fashion of the country prevented his interesting himself in the widow and son of the far-dreaded robber MacTavish Mhor; and he thus missed an opportunity, which he afterwards sorely repented, of doing much good.

When Hamish MacTavish entered his mother's hut, it was only to throw himself on the bed he had left, and exclaiming, 'Undone — undone!' to give vent, in cries of grief and anger, to his deep sense of the deceit which had been practised on him, and of the cruel predicament to which he was reduced.

Elspat was prepared for the first explosion of her son's passion, and said to herself, 'It is but the mountain torrent, swelled by the thunder-shower. Let us sit and rest us by the bank; for all its present tumult, the time will soon come when we may pass it dryshod.' She suffered his complaints and his

reproaches, which were, even in the midst of his agony, respectful and affectionate, to die away without returning any answer; and when, at length, having exhausted all the exclamations of sorrow which his language, copious in expressing the feelings of the heart, affords to the sufferer, he sunk into a gloomy silence, she suffered the interval to continue near an hour ere she approached her son's couch.

'And now,' she said at length, with a voice in which the authority of the mother was qualified by her tenderness, 'have you exhausted your idle sorrows, and are you able to place what you have gained against what you have lost? Is the false son of Dermid your brother, or the father of your tribe, that you weep because you cannot bind yourself to his belt, and become one of those who must do his bidding? Could you find in yonder distant country the lakes and the mountains that you leave behind you here? Can you hunt the deer of Breadalbane in the forests of America, or will the ocean afford you the silver-scaled salmon of the Awe? Consider, then, what is your loss, and, like a wise man, set it against what you have won.'

'I have lost all, mother,' replied Hamish, 'since I have broken my word and lost my honour. I might tell my tale, but who — oh, who would believe me?' The unfortunate young man again clasped his hands together, and, pressing them to his forehead, hid his face upon the bed.

Elspat was now really alarmed, and perhaps wished the fatal deceit had been left unattempted. She had no hope or refuge saving in the eloquence of persuasion, of which she possessed no small share, though her total ignorance of the world as it actually existed rendered its energy unavailing. She urged her son, by every tender epithet which a parent could bestow, to take care for his own safety.

'Leave me,' she said, 'to baffle your pursuers. I will save your life — I will save your honour. I will tell them that my fair-haired Hamish fell from the "corrie dhu" (black precipice) into the gulf, of which human eye never beheld the bottom. I will tell them this, and I will fling your plaid on the thorns which grow on the brink of the precipice, that they may believe my words. They will believe, and they will return to the dun of the double-crest; for [illegible]ch the Saxon drum can call the living to die, it cannot re[illegible] the dead to their slavish standard. Then will we travel together far northward to the salt lakes of Kintail, and place glens and mountains betwixt us and the sons

of Dermid. We will visit the shores of the dark lake, and my kinsmen — for was not my mother of the children of Kenneth, and will they not remember us with the old love? — my kinsmen will receive us with the affection of the olden time, which lives in those distant glens, where the Gael still dwell in their nobleness, unmingled with the churl Saxons, or with the base brood that are their tools and their slaves.'

The energy of the language, somewhat allied to hyperbole, even in its most ordinary expressions, now seemed almost too weak to afford Elspat the means of bringing out the splendid picture which she presented to her son of the land in which she proposed to him to take refuge. Yet the colours were few with which she could paint her Highland paradise. 'The hills,' she said, 'were higher and more magnificent than those of Breadalbane; Ben Cruachan was but a dwarf to Skooroora. The lakes were broader and larger, and abounded not only with fish, but with the enchanted and amphibious animal which gives oil to the lamp.[1] The deer were larger and more numerous; the white-tusked boar, the chase of which the brave loved best, was yet to be roused in those western solitudes; the men were nobler, wiser, and stronger than the degenerate brood who lived under the Saxon banner. The daughters of the land were beautiful, with blue eyes and fair hair, and bosoms of snow, and out of these she would choose a wife for Hamish, of blameless descent, spotless fame, fixed and true affection, who should be in their summer bothy as a beam of the sun, and in their winter abode as the warmth of the needful fire.'

Such were the topics with which Elspat strove to soothe the despair of her son, and to determine him, if possible, to leave the fatal spot, on which he seemed resolved to linger. The style of her rhetoric was poetical, but in other respects resembled that which, like other fond mothers, she had lavished on Hamish while a child or a boy, in order to gain his consent to do something he had no mind to; and she spoke louder, quicker, and more earnestly, in proportion as she began to despair of her words carrying conviction.

On the mind of Hamish her eloquence made no impression. He knew far better than she did the actual situation of the country, and was sensible that, though it might be possible to hide himself as a fugitive among more distant mountains, there was now no corner in the Highlands in which his father's

[1] The seals are considered by the Highlanders as enchanted princes.

profession could be practised, even if he had not adopted, from the improved ideas of the time when he lived, the opinion that the trade of the cateran was no longer the road to honour and distinction. Her words were therefore poured into regardless ears, and she exhausted herself in vain in the attempt to paint the regions of her mother's kinsmen in such terms as might tempt Hamish to accompany her thither. She spoke for hours, but she spoke in vain. She could extort no answer save groans and sighs, and ejaculations expressing the extremity of despair.

At length, starting on her feet, and changing the monotonous tone in which she had chanted, as it were, the praises of the province of refuge into the short, stern language of eager passion — 'I am a fool,' she said, 'to spend my words upon an idle, poor-spirited, unintelligent boy, who crouches like a hound to the lash. Wait here, and receive your taskmasters, and abide your chastisement at their hands; but do not think your mother's eyes will behold it. I could not see it and live My eyes have looked often upon death, but never upon dishonour. Farewell, Hamish! We never meet again.' She dashed from the hut like a lapwing, and perhaps for the moment actually entertained the purpose which she expressed, of parting with her son for ever.

A fearful sight she would have been that evening to any who might have met her wandering through the wilderness like a restless spirit, and speaking to herself in language which will endure no translation. She rambled for hours, seeking rather than shunning the most dangerous paths. The precarious track through the morass, the dizzy path along the edge of the precipice, or by the banks of the gulfing river, were the roads which, far from avoiding, she sought with eagerness, and traversed with reckless haste. But the courage arising from despair was the means of saving the life which (though deliberate suicide was rarely practised in the Highlands) she was perhaps desirous of terminating. Her step on the verge of the precipice was firm as that of the wild goat. Her eye, in that state of excitation, was so keen as to discern, even amid darkness, the perils which noon would not have enabled a stranger to avoid.

Elspat's course was not directly forward, else she had soon been far from the bothy in which she had left her son. It was circuitous, for that hut was the centre to which her heartstrings were chained, and though she wandered around it, she felt it impossible to leave the vicinity. With the first beams of

morning, she returned to the hut. Awhile she paused at the wattled door, as if ashamed that lingering fondness should have brought her back to the spot which she had left with the purpose of never returning; but there was yet more of fear and anxiety in her hesitation — of anxiety, lest her fair-haired son had suffered from the effects of her potion; of fear, lest his enemies had come upon him in the night. She opened the door of the hut gently, and entered with noiseless step. Exhausted with his sorrow and anxiety, and not entirely relieved, perhaps, from the influence of the powerful opiate, Hamish Bean again slept the stern sound sleep by which the Indians are said to be overcome during the interval of their torments. His mother was scarcely sure that she actually discerned his form on the bed, scarce certain that her ear caught the sound of his breathing. With a throbbing heart, Elspat went to the fireplace in the centre of the hut, where slumbered, covered with a piece of turf, the glimmering embers of the fire, never extinguished on a Scottish hearth until the indwellers leave the mansion for ever.

'Feeble *greishogh*,' she said, as she lighted, by the help of a match, a splinter of bog-pine which was to serve the place of a candle — 'weak greishogh, soon shalt thou be put out for ever, and may Heaven grant that the life of Elspat MacTavish have no longer duration than thine!'

While she spoke, she raised the blazing light towards the bed, on which still lay the prostrate limbs of her son, in a posture that left it doubtful whether he slept or swooned. As she advanced towards him, the light flashed upon his eyes; he started up in an instant, made a stride forward with his naked dirk in his hand, like a man armed to meet a mortal enemy, and exclaimed, 'Stand off! — on thy life, stand off!'

'It is the word and the action of my husband,' answered Elspat; 'and I know by his speech and his step the son of MacTavish Mhor.'

'Mother,' said Hamish, relapsing from his tone of desperate firmness into one of melancholy expostulation — 'oh, dearest mother, wherefore have you returned hither?'

'Ask why the hind comes back to the fawn,' said Elspat — 'why the cat of the mountain returns to her lodge and her young. Know you, Hamish, that the heart of the mother only lives in the bosom of the child.'

'Then will it soon cease to throb,' said Hamish, 'unless it can beat within a bosom that lies beneath the turf. Mother

do not blame me; if I weep, it is not for myself but for you, for my sufferings will soon be over; but yours —— O, who but Heaven shall set a boundary to them!'

Elspat shuddered and stepped backward, but almost instantly resumed her firm and upright position and her dauntless bearing.

'I thought thou wert a man but even now,' she said, 'and thou art again a child. Hearken to me yet, and let us leave this place together. Have I done thee wrong or injury? if so, yet do not avenge it so cruelly. See, Elspat MacTavish, who never kneeled before even to a priest, falls prostrate before her own son, and craves his forgiveness.' And at once she threw herself on her knees before the young man, seized on his hand, and kissing it an hundred times, repeated as often, in heart-breaking accents, the most earnest entreaties for forgiveness.

'Pardon,' she exclaimed — 'pardon, for the sake of your father's ashes — pardon, for the sake of the pain with which I bore thee, the care with which I nurtured thee! Hear it, Heaven, and behold it, earth — the mother asks pardon of her child, and she is refused!'

It was in vain that Hamish endeavoured to stem this tide of passion, by assuring his mother, with the most solemn asseverations, that he forgave entirely the fatal deceit which she had practised upon him.

'Empty words,' she said — 'idle protestations, which are but used to hide the obduracy of your resentment. Would you have me believe you, then leave the hut this instant, and retire from a country which every hour renders more dangerous. Do this, and I may think you have forgiven me; refuse it, and again I call on moon and stars, Heaven and earth, to witness the unrelenting resentment with which you persecute your mother for a fault which, if it be one, is but out of love to you.'

'Mother,' said Hamish, 'your object you move me not. I will fly before no man. Were Montcaldine should send every Gael that is under his banner, here and in this place will I abide them; and when you bid me fly, you may as well command yonder mountain to be loosened from its foundations. Had I been sure of the road by which they are coming hither, I had spared them the pains of seeking me; but I might go by the mountain, while they perchance came by the lake. Here I will abide my fate; nor is there in Scotland a voice of power enough to bid me stir from hence, and be obeyed.'

'Here, then, I also stay,' said Elspat, rising up and speaking

with assumed composure. 'I have seen my husband's death; my eyelids shall not grieve to look on the fall of my son. But MacTavish Mhor died as became the brave, with his good sword in his right hand; my son will perish like the bullock that is driven to the shambles by the Saxon owner who has bought him for a price.'

'Mother,' said the unhappy young man, 'you have taken my life — to that you have a right, for you gave it; but touch not my honour. It came to me from a brave train of ancestors, and should be sullied neither by man's deed nor woman's speech. What I shall do, perhaps I myself yet know not; but tempt me no farther by reproachful words; you have already made wounds more than you can ever heal.'

'It is well, my son,' said Elspat, in reply. 'Expect neither farther complaint nor remonstrance from me; but let us be silent, and wait the chance which Heaven shall send us.'

The sun arose on the next morning, and found the bothy silent as the grave. The mother and son had arisen, and were engaged each in their separate task — Hamish in preparing and cleaning his arms with the greatest accuracy, but with an air of deep dejection. Elspat, more restless in her agony of spirit, employed herself in making ready the food which the distress of yesterday had induced them both to dispense with for an unusual number of hours. She placed it on the board before her son so soon as it was prepared, with the words of a Gaelic poet — 'Without daily food, the husbandman's ploughshare stands still in the furrow; without daily food, the sword of the warrior is too heavy for his hand. Our bodies are our slaves, yet they must be fed if we would have their service. So spake in ancient days the Blind Bard to the warriors of Fion.'

The young man made no r ply, but he fed on what was placed before him, as if to gather strength for the scene which he was to undergo. When his mother saw that he had eaten what sufficed him, she again filled the fatal quaigh, and proffered it as the conclusion of the repast. But he started aside with a convulsive gesture, expressive at once of fear and abhorrence.

'Nay, my son,' she said, 'this time surely thou hast no cause of fear.'

'Urge me not, mother,' answered Hamish; 'or put the leprous toad into a flagon, and I will drink; but from that accursed cup, and of that mind-destroying potion, never will I taste more!'

'At your pleasure, my son,' said Elspat, haughtily, and

began, with much apparent assiduity, the various domestic tasks which had been interrupted during the preceding day. Whatever was at her heart, all anxiety seemed banished from her looks and demeanour. It was but from an over-activity of bustling exertion that it might have been perceived, by a close observer, that her actions were spurred by some internal cause of painful excitement; and such a spectator, too, might also have observed how often she broke off the snatches of songs or tunes which she hummed, apparently without knowing what she was doing, in order to cast a hasty glance from the door of the hut. Whatever might be in the mind of Hamish, his demeanour was directly the reverse of that adopted by his mother. Having finished the task of cleaning and preparing his arms, which he arranged within the hut, he sat himself down before the door of the bothy, and watched the opposite hill, like the fixed sentinel who expects the approach of an enemy. Noon found him in the same unchanged posture, and it was an hour after that period, when his mother, standing beside him, laid her hand on his shoulder, and said, in a tone indifferent, as if she had been talking of some friendly visit, 'When dost thou expect them?'

'They cannot be here till the shadows fall long to the eastward,' replied Hamish; 'that is, even supposing the nearest party, commanded by Sergeant Allan Breack Cameron, has been commanded hither by express from Dunbarton, as it is most likely they will.'

'Then enter beneath your mother's roof once more; partake the last time of the food which she has prepared; after this, let them come, and thou shalt see if thy mother is an useless encumbrance in the day of strife. Thy hand, practised as it is, cannot fire [illegible]e arms so fast as I can load t[illegible]; nay, if it is necessary, I do not myself fear the flash or [illegible]eport, and my aim has been held fatal.'

'In the name of Heaven, mother, meddle not with this matter!' said Hamish. 'Allan Breack is a wise man and a kind one, and comes of a good stem. It may be, he can promise for our officers, that they will touch me with no infamous punishment; and if they offer me confinement in the dungeon, or death by the musket, to that I may not object.'

'Alas, and wilt thou trust to their word, my foolish child? Remember the race of Dermid were ever fair and false, and no sooner shall they have gyves on thy hands than they will strip thy shoulders for the scourge.'

'Save your advice, mother,' said Hamish, sternly; 'for me, my mind is made up.'

But though he spoke thus, to escape the almost persecuting urgency of his mother, Hamish would have found it, at that moment, impossible to say upon what course of conduct he had thus fixed. On one point alone he was determined — namely, to abide his destiny, be [it] what it might, and not to add to the breach of his word, of which he had been involuntarily rendered guilty, by attempting to escape from punishment. This act of self-devotion he conceived to be due to his own honour and that of his countrymen. Which of his comrades would in future be trusted, if he should be considered as having broken his word, and betrayed the confidence of his officers? and whom but Hamish Bean MacTavish would the Gael accuse, for having verified and confirmed the suspicions which the Saxon general was well known to entertain against the good faith of the Highlanders? He was, therefore, bent firmly to abide his fate. But whether his intention was to yield himself peaceably into the hands of the party who should come to apprehend him, or whether he purposed, by a show of resistance, to provoke them to kill him on the spot, was a question which he could not himself have answered. His desire to see Barcaldine, and explain the cause of his absence at the appointed time, urged him to the one course; his fear of the degrading punishment, and of his mother's bitter upbraidings, strongly instigated the latter and the more dangerous purpose. He left it to chance to decide when the crisis should arrive; nor did he tarry long in expectation of the catastrophe.

Evening approached, the gigantic shadows of the mountains streamed in darkness towards the east, while their western peaks were still glowing with crimson and gold. The road which winds round Ben Cruachan was fully visible from the door of the bothy, when a party of five Highland soldiers, whose arms glanced in the sun, wheeled suddenly into sight from the most distant extremity, where the highway is hidden behind the mountain. One of the party walked a little before the other four, who marched regularly and in files, according to the rules of military discipline. There was no dispute, from the firelocks which they carried, and the plaids and bonnets which they wore, that they were a party of Hamish's regiment, under a non-commissioned officer; and there could be as little doubt of the purpose of their appearance on the banks of Lock Awe.

'They come briskly forward,' said the widow of MacTavish

Mhor; 'I wonder how fast or how slow some of them will return again! But they are five, and it is too much odds for a fair field. Step back within the hut, my son, and shoot from the loophole beside the door. Two you may bring down ere they quit the highroad for the footpath; there will remain but three, and your father, with my aid, has often stood against that number.'

Hamish Bean took the gun which his mother offered, but did not stir from the door of the hut. He was soon visible to the party on the highroad, as was evident from their increasing their pace to a run; the files, however, still keeping together like coupled greyhounds, and advancing with great rapidity. In far less time than would have been accomplished by men less accustomed to the mountains, they had left the highroad, traversed the narrow path, and approached within pistol-shot of the bothy, at the door of which stood Hamish, fixed like a statue of stone, with his firelock in his hand; while his mother, placed behind him, and almost driven to frenzy by the violence of her passions, reproached him in the strongest terms which despair could invent for his want of resolution and faintness of heart. Her words increased the bitter gall which was arising in the young man's own spirit, as he observed the unfriendly speed with which his late comrades were eagerly making towards him, like hounds towards the stag when he is at bay. The untamed and angry passions which he inherited from father and mother were awakened by the supposed hostility of those who pursued him; and the restraint under which these passions had been hitherto held by his sober judgment began gradually to give way.

The sergeant now called to him, 'Hamish Bean MacTavish, lay down your arms and surrender.'

'Do *you* stand, Allan Breack Cameron, and command your men to stand, or it will be the worse for us all.'

'Halt, men,' said the sergeant, but continuing himself to advance. 'Hamish, think what you do, and give up your gun; you may spill blood, but you cannot escape punishment.'

'The scourge — the scourge, my son — beware the scourge!' whispered his mother.

'Take heed, Allan Breack,' said Hamish. 'I would not hurt you willingly, but I will not be taken unless you can assure me against the Saxon lash.'

'Fool!' answered Cameron, 'you know I cannot. Yet I will do all I can. I will say I met you on your return, and

the punishment will be light; but give up your musket. Come on, men.'

Instantly he rushed forward, extending his arms as if to push aside the young man's levelled firelock. Elspat exclaimed, 'Now, spare not your father's blood to defend your father's hearth!' Hamish fired his piece, and Cameron dropped dead. All these things happened, it might be said, in the same moment of time. The soldiers rushed forward and seized Hamish, who, seeming petrified with what he had done, offered not the least resistance. Not so his mother, who, seeing the men about to put handcuffs on her son, threw herself on the soldiers with such fury that it required two of them to hold her, while the rest secured the prisoner.

'Are you not an accursed creature,' said one of the men to Hamish, 'to have slain your best friend, who was contriving, during the whole march, how he could find some way of getting you off without punishment for your desertion?'

'Do you hear *that*, mother?' said Hamish, turning himself as much towards her as his bonds would permit; but the mother heard nothing, and saw nothing. She had fainted on the floor of her hut. Without waiting for her recovery, the party almost immediately began their homeward march towards Dunbarton, leading along with them their prisoner. They thought it necessary, however, to stay for a little space at the village of Dalmally, from which they despatched a party of the inhabitants to bring away the body of their unfortunate leader, while they themselves repaired to a magistrate to state what had happened, and require his instructions as to the farther course to be pursued. The crime being of a military character, they were instructed to march the prisoner to Dunbarton without delay.

The swoon of the mother of Hamish lasted for a length of time, the longer perhaps that her constitution, strong as it was, must have been much exhausted by her previous agitation of three days' endurance. She was roused from her stupor at length by female voices, which cried the coronach, or lament for the dead, with clapping of hands and loud exclamations; while the melancholy note of a lament, appropriate to the clan Cameron, played on the bagpipe, was heard from time to time.

Elspat started up like one awakened from the dead, and without any accurate recollection of the scene which had passed before her eyes. There were females in the hut, who were swathing the corpse in its bloody plaid before carrying it from

the fatal spot. 'Women,' she said, starting up and interrupting their chant at once and their labour — 'tell me, women, why sing you the dirge of MacDhonuil Dhu in the house of MacTavish Mhor?'

'She-wolf, be silent with thine ill-omened yell,' answered one of the females, a relation of the deceased, 'and let us do our duty to our beloved kinsman! There shall never be coronach cried or dirge played for thee or thy bloody wolf-burd. The ravens shall eat him from the gibbet, and the foxes and wild-cats shall tear thy corpse upon the hill. Cursed be he that would sain your bones, or add a stone to your cairn!'

'Daughter of a foolish mother,' answered the widow of MacTavish Mhor, 'know that the gibbet with which you threaten us is no portion of our inheritance. For thirty years the "black tree of the law," whose apples are dead men's bodies, hungered after the beloved husband of my heart; but he died like a brave man, with the sword in his hand, and defrauded it of its hopes and its fruit.'

'So shall it not be with thy child, bloody sorceress,' replied the female mourner, whose passions were as violent as those of Elspat herself: 'the ravens shall tear his fair hair to line their nests, before the sun sinks beneath the Treshornish islands.'

These words recalled to Elspat's mind the whole history of the last three dreadful days. At first, she stood fixed as if the extremity of distress had converted her into stone; but in a minute the pride and violence of her temper, outbraved as she thought herself on her own threshold, enabled her to reply — 'Yes, insulting hag, my fair-haired boy may die, but it will not be with a white hand: it has been dyed in the blood of his enemy, in the best blood of a Cameron — remember that; and when you lay your dead in his grave, let it be his best epitaph, that he was killed by Hamish Bean for essaying to lay hands on the son of MacTavish Mhor on his own threshold. Farewell; the shame of defeat, loss, and slaughter remain with the clan that has endured it!'

The relative of the slaughtered Cameron raised her voice in reply; but Elspat, disdaining to continue the objurgation, or perhaps feeling her grief likely to overmaster her power of expressing her resentment, had left the hut, and was walking forth in the bright moonshine.

The females who were arranging the corpse of the slaughtered man hurried from their melancholy labour to look after her

tall figure as it glided away among the cliffs. 'I am glad she is gone,' said one of the younger persons who assisted. 'I would as soon dress a corpse when the great Fiend himself — God sain us! — stood visibly before us, as when Elspat of the Tree is amongst us. Ay — ay, even overmuch intercourse hath she had with the Enemy in her day.'

'Silly woman,' answered the female who had maintained the dialogue with the departed Elspat, 'thinkest thou that there is a worse fiend on earth, or beneath it, than the pride and fury of an offended woman, like yonder bloody-minded hag? Know that blood has been as familiar to her as the dew to the mountain-daisy. Many and many a brave man has she caused to breathe their last for little wrong they had done to her or hers. But her hough-sinews are cut, now that her wolf-burd must, like a murderer as he is, make a murderer's end.'

Whilst the women thus discoursed together, as they watched the corpse of Allan Breack Cameron, the unhappy cause of his death pursued her lonely way across the mountain. While she remained within sight of the bothy, she put a strong constraint on herself, that by no alteration of pace or gesture she might afford to her enemies the triumph of calculating the excess of her mental agitation, nay, despair. She stalked, therefore, with a slow rather than a swift step, and, holding herself upright, seemed at once to endure with firmness that woe which was passed and bid defiance to that which was about to come. But when she was beyond the sight of those who remained in the hut, she could no longer suppress the extremity of her agitation. Drawing her mantle wildly round her, she stopped at the first knoll, and climbing to its summit, extended her arms up to the bright moon, as if accusing Heaven and earth for her misfortunes, and uttered scream on scream, like those of an eagle whose nest has been plundered of her brood. Awhile she vented her grief in these inarticulate cries, then rushed on her way with a hasty and unequal step, in the vain hope of overtaking the party which was conveying her son a prisoner to Dunbarton. But her strength, superhuman as it seemed, failed her in the trial, nor was it possible for her, with her utmost efforts, to accomplish her purpose.

Yet she pressed onward, with all the speed which her exhausted frame could exert. When food became indispensable, she entered the first cottage. 'Give me to eat,' she said; 'I am the widow of MacTavish Mhor, I am the mother of Hamish MacTavish Bean — give me to eat, that I may once more see

my fair-haired son.' Her demand was never refused, though granted in many cases with a kind of struggle between compassion and aversion in some of those to whom she applied, which was in others qualified by fear. The share she had had in occasioning the death of Allan Breack Cameron, which must probably involve that of her own son, was not accurately known; but, from a knowledge of her violent passions and former habits of life, no one doubted that in one way or other she had been the cause of the catastrophe; and Hamish Bean was considered, in the slaughter which he had committed, rather as the instrument than as the accomplice of his mother.

This general opinion of his countrymen was of little service to the unfortunate Hamish. As his captain, Green Colin, understood the manners and habits of his country, he had no difficulty in collecting from Hamish the particulars accompanying his supposed desertion, and the subsequent death of the non-commissioned officer. He felt the utmost compassion for a youth who had thus fallen a victim to the extravagant and fatal fondness of a parent. But he had no excuse to plead which could rescue his unhappy recruit from the doom which military discipline and the award of a court-martial denounced against him for the crime he had committed.

No time had been lost in their proceedings, and as little was interposed betwixt sentence and execution. General —— had determined to make a severe example of the first deserter who should fall into his power, and here was one who had defended himself by main force, and slain in the affray the officer sent to take him into custody. A fitter subject for punishment could not have occurred, and Hamish was sentenced to immediate execution. All which the interference of his captain in his favour could procure was that he should die a soldier's death; for there had been a purpose of executing him upon the gibbet.

The worthy clergyman of Glenorquhy chanced to be at Dunbarton, in attendance upon some church-courts, at the time of this catastrophe. He visited his unfortunate parishioner in his dungeon, found him ignorant indeed, but not obstinate, and the answers which he received from him, when conversing on religious topics, were such as induced him doubly to regret that a mind naturally pure and noble should have remained unhappily so wild and uncultivated.

When he ascertained the real character and dispostion of the young man, the worthy pastor made deep and painful reflections

on his own shyness and timidity, which, arising out of the evil fame that attached to the lineage of Hamish, had restrained him from charitably endeavouring to bring this strayed sheep within the great fold. While the good minister blamed his cowardice in times past, which had deterred him from risking his person, to save, perhaps, an immortal soul, he resolved no longer to be governed by such timid counsels, but to endeavour, by application to his officers, to obtain a reprieve, at least, if not a pardon, for the criminal, in whom he felt so unusually interested, at once from his docility of temper and his generosity of disposition.

Accordingly the divine sought out Captain Campbell at the barracks within the garrison. There was a gloomy melancholy on the brow of Green Colin, which was not lessened, but increased, when the clergyman stated his name, quality, and errand. 'You cannot tell me better of the young man than I am disposed to believe,' answered the Highland officer; 'you cannot ask me to do more in his behalf than I am of myself inclined, and have already endeavoured, to do. But it is all in vain. General —— is half a Lowlander, half an Englishman. He has no idea of the high and enthusiastic character which in these mountains often brings exalted virtues in contact with great crimes, which, however, are less offences of the heart than errors of the understanding. I have gone so far as to tell him, that in this young man he was putting to death the best and the bravest of my company, where all, or almost all, are good and brave. I explained to him by what strange delusion the culprit's apparent desertion was occasioned, and how little his heart was accessary to the crime which his hand unhappily committed. His answer was, "These are Highland visions, Captain Campbell, as unsatisfactory and vain as those of the second-sight. An act of gross desertion may, in any case, be palliated under the plea of intoxication; the murder of an officer may be as easily coloured over with that of temporary insanity. The example must be made, and if it has fallen on a man otherwise a good recruit, it will have the greater effect." Such being the general's unalterable purpose,' continued Captain Campbell, with a sigh, 'be it your care, reverend sir, that your penitent prepare by break of day to-morrow for that great change which we shall all one day be subjected to.'

'And for which,' said the clergyman, 'may God prepare us all, as I in my duty will not be wanting to this poor youth.'

Next morning, as the very earliest beams of sunrise saluted

the grey towers which crown the summit of that singular and tremendous rock, the soldiers of the new Highland regiment appeared on the parade, within the Castle of Dunbarton, and having fallen into order, began to move downward by steep staircases and narrow passages towards the external barrier-gate, which is at the very bottom of the rock. The wild wailings of the pibroch were heard at times, interchanged with the drums and fifes, which beat the 'Dead March.'

The unhappy criminal's fate did not, at first, excite that general sympathy in the regiment which would probably have arisen had he been executed for desertion alone. The slaughter of the unfortunate Allan Breack had given a different colour to Hamish's offence; for the deceased was much beloved, and besides belonged to a numerous and powerful clan, of whom there were many in the ranks. The unfortunate criminal, on the contrary, was little known to, and scarcely connected with, any of his regimental companions. His father had been, indeed, distinguished for his strength and manhood; but he was of a broken clan, as those names were called who had no chief to lead them to battle.

It would have been almost impossible in another case to have turned out of the ranks of the regiment the party necessary for execution of the sentence; but the six individuals selected for that purpose were friends of the deceased, descended, like him, from the race of MacDhonuil Dhu; and while they prepared for the dismal task which their duty imposed, it was not without a stern feeling of gratified revenge. The leading company of the regiment began now to defile from the barrier-gate, and was followed by the others, each successively moving and halting according to the orders of the adjutant, so as to form three sides of an oblong square, with the ranks faced inwards. The fourth or blank side of the square was closed up by the huge and lofty precipice on which the castle rises. About the centre of the procession, bare-headed, disarmed, and with his hands bound, came the unfortunate victim of military law. He was deadly pale, but his step was firm and his eye as bright as ever. The clergyman walked by his side: the coffin which was to receive his mortal remains was borne before him. The looks of his comrades were still, composed, and solemn. They felt for the youth, whose handsome form and manly yet submissive deportment had, as soon as he was distinctly visible to them, softened the hearts of many, even of some who had been actuated by vindictive feelings.

The coffin destined for the yet living body of Hamish Bean was placed at the bottom of the hollow square, about two yards distant from the foot of the precipice, which rises in that place as steep as a stone wall to the height of three or four hundred feet. Thither the prisoner was also led, the clergyman still continuing by his side, pouring forth exhortations of courage and consolation, to which the youth appeared to listen with respectful devotion. With slow, and, it seemed, almost unwilling, steps the firing party entered the square, and were drawn up facing the prisoner, about ten yards distant. The clergyman was now about to retire. 'Think, my son,' he said, 'on what I have told you, and let your hope be rested on the anchor which I have given. You will then exchange a short and miserable existence here for a life in which you will experience neither sorrow nor pain. Is there aught else which you can entrust to me to execute for you?'

The youth looked at his sleeve-buttons. They were of gold, booty perhaps which his father had taken from some English officer during the civil wars. The clergyman disengaged them from his sleeves.

'My mother!' he said with some effort — 'give them to my poor mother! See her, good father, and teach her what she should think of all this. Tell her Hamish Bean is more glad to die than ever he was to rest after the longest day's hunting. Farewell, sir — farewell!'

The good man could scarce retire from the fatal spot. An officer afforded him the support of his arm. At his last look towards Hamish, he beheld him alive and kneeling on the coffin; the few that were around him had all withdrawn. The fatal word was given, the rock rung sharp to the sound of the discharge, and Hamish, falling forward with a groan, died, it may be supposed, without almost a sense of the passing agony.

Ten or twelve of his own company then came forward, and laid with solemn reverence the remains of their comrade in the coffin, while the 'Dead March' was again struck up, and the several companies, marching in single files, passed the coffin one by one, in order that all might receive from the awful spectacle the warning which it was peculiarly intended to afford. The regiment was marched off the ground, and re-ascended the ancient cliff, ir music, as usual on such occasions, striking lively strains, as if sorrow, or even deep thought, should as short a while as possible be the tenant of the soldier's bosom.

At the same time the small party which we before mentioned bore the bier of the ill-fated Hamish to his humble grave in a corner of the church-yard of Dunbarton, usually assigned to criminals. Here, among the dust of the guilty, lies a youth whose name, had he survived the ruin of the fatal events by which he was hurried into crime, might have adorned the annals of the brave.

The minister of Glenorquhy left Dunbarton immediately after he had witnessed the last scene of this melancholy catastrophe. His reason acquiesced in the justice of the sentence, which required blood for blood, and he acknowledged that the vindictive character of his countrymen required to be powerfully restrained by the strong curb of social law. But still he mourned over the individual victim. Who may arraign the bolt of Heaven when it bursts among the sons of the forest; yet who can refrain from mourning when it selects for the object of its blighting aim the fair stem of a young oak, that promised to be the pride of the dell in which it flourished? Musing on these melancholy events, noon found him engaged in the mountain passes, by which he was to return to his still distant home.

Confident in his knowledge of the country, the clergyman had left the main road, to seek one of those shorter paths which are only used by pedestrians, or by men, like the minister, mounted on the small, but sure-footed, hardy, and sagacious horses of the country. The place which he now traversed was in itself gloomy and desolate, and tradition had added to it the terror of superstition, by affirming it was haunted by an evil spirit, termed *Cloght-dearg*, that is, Redmantle, who at all times, but especially at noon and at midnight, traversed the glen, in enmity both to man and the inferior creation, did such evil as her power was permitted to extend to, and afflicted with ghostly terrors those whom she had not license otherwise to hurt.

The minister of Glenorquhy had set his face in opposition to many of these superstitions, which he justly thought were derived from the dark ages of Popery, perhaps even from those of paganism, and unfit to be entertained or believed by the Christians of an enlightened age. Some of his more attached parishioners considered him as too rash in opposing the ancient faith of their fathers; and though they honoured the moral intrepidity of their pastor, they could not avoid entertaining and expressing fears that he would one day fall a victim to his

te rity, and be torn to pieces in the glen of the Cloght-dearg, or some of those other haunted wilds which he appeared rather to have a pride and pleasure in traversing alone, on the days and hours when the wicked spirits were supposed to have esper power over man and beast.

These legends came across the mind of the clergyman; and, solitary as he was, a melancholy smile shaded his cheek, as he thought of the inconsistency of human nature, and reflected how many brave men, whom the yell of the pibroch would have sent headlong against fixed bayonets, as the wild bull rushes on his enemy, might have yet feared to encounter those visionary terrors, which he himself, a man of peace, and in ordinary perils no way remarkable for the firmness of his nerves, was now risking without hesitation.

As he looked around the scene of desolation, he could not but acknowledge, in his own mind, that it was not ill chosen for the haunt of those spirits which are said to delight in solitude and desolation. The glen was so steep and narrow, that there was but just room for the meridian sun to dart a few scattered rays upon the gloomy and precarious stream which stole through its recesses, for the most part in silence, but occasionally murmuring sullenly against the rocks and large stones, which seemed determined to bar its further progress. In winter, or in the rainy season, this small torrent was a foaming torrent of the most [illegible], and it was at such periods that it had torn open [illegible] the broad-faced and huge fragments of rock which, at the season of which we speak, hid its course from the eye, and seemed disposed totally to interrupt its course. 'Undoubtedly,' thought the clergyman, 'this mountain rivulet, suddenly swelled by a water-spout or thunderstorm, has often been the cause of those accidents which, happening in the glen called by her name, have been ascribed to the agency of the Cloght-dearg.'

Just as this idea crossed his mind, he heard a female voice exclaim, in a wild and thrilling accent, 'Michael Tyrie — Michael Tyrie!' He looked round in astonishment, and not without some fear. It seemed for an instant as if the evil being, whose existence he had disowned, was about to appear for the punishment of his incredulity. This alarm did not hold him more than an instant, nor did it prevent his replying in a firm voice, 'Who calls, and where are you?'

'One who journeys in wretchedness, between life and death,' answered the voice; and the speaker, a tall female, appeared

from among the fragments of rocks which had concealed her from view.

As she approached more closely, her mantle of bright tartan, in which the red colour much predominated, her stature, the long stride with which she advanced, and the writhen features and wild eyes which were visible from under her curch, would have made her no inadequate representative of the spirit which gave name to the valley. But Mr. Tyrie instantly knew her as the Woman of the Tree, the widow of MacTavish Mhor, the now childless mother of Hamish Bean. I am not sure whether the minister would not have endured the visitation of the Cloght-dearg herself, rather than the shock of Elspat's presence, considering her crime and her misery. He drew up his horse instinctively, and stood endeavouring to collect his ideas, while a few paces brought her up to his horse's head.

'Michael Tyrie,' said she, 'the foolish women of the clachan hold thee as a god; be one to me, and say that my son lives. Say this, and I too will be of thy worship: I will bend my knees on the seventh day in thy house of worship, and thy God shall be my God.'

'Unhappy woman,' replied the clergyman, 'man forms not pactions with his Maker as with a creature of clay like himself. Thinkest thou to chaffer with Him who formed the earth and spread out the heavens, or that thou canst offer aught of homage or devotion that can be worth acceptance in His eyes? He hath asked obedience, not sacrifice; patience under the trials with which He afflicts us, instead of vain bribes, such as man offers to his changeful brother of clay, that he may be moved from his purpose.'

'Be silent, priest!' answered the desperate woman: 'speak not to me the words of thy white book. Elspat's kindred were of those who crossed themselves, and knelt when the sacring bell was rung; and she knows that atonement can be made on the altar for deeds done in the field. Elspat had once flocks and herds, goats upon the cliffs, and cattle in the strath. She wore gold around her neck and on her hair — thick twists as those worn by the heroes of old. All these would she have resigned to the priest — all these; and if he wished for the ornaments of a gentle lady, or the sporran of a high chief, though they had been great as MacCallan Mhor himself, MacTavish Mhor would have procured them if Elspat had promised them. Elspat is now poor, and has nothing to give. But the Black Abbot of Inchaffray would have bidden her scourge her

shoulders and macerate her feet by pilgrimage, and he would have granted his pardon to her when he saw that her blood had flowed, and that her flesh had been torn. These were the priests who had indeed power even with the most powerful; they threatened the great men of the earth with the word of their mouth, the sentence of their book, the blaze of their torch, the sound of their sacring bell. The mighty bent to their will, and unloosed at the word of the priests those whom they had bound in their wrath, and set at liberty, unharmed, him whom they had sentenced to death, and for whose blood they had thirsted. These were a powerful race, and might well ask the poor to kneel, since their power could humble the proud. But you! against whom are ye strong, but against women who have been guilty of folly and men who never wore sword? The priests of old were like the winter torrent which fills this hollow valley, and rolls these massive rocks against each other as easily as the boy plays with the ball which he casts before him. But you! you do but resemble the summer-stricken stream, which is turned aside by the rushes, and stemmed by a bush of sedges. Woe worth you, for there is no help in you!'

The clergyman was at no loss to conceive that Elspat had lost the Roman Catholic faith without gaining any other, and that she still retained a vague and confused idea of the composition with the priesthood, by confession, alms, and penance, and of their extensive power, which, according to her notion, was adequate, if duly propitiated, even to effecting her son's safety.

Compassionating her situation, and allowing for her errors and ignorance, he answered her with mildness. 'Alas, unhappy woman! Would to God I could convince thee as easily where thou oughtest to seek, and art sure to find, consolation as I can assure you with a single word that, were Rome and all her priesthood once more in the plenitude of their power, they could not, for largesse or penance, afford to thy misery an atom of aid or comfort. Elspat MacTavish, I grieve to tell you the news.'

'I know them without thy speech,' said the unhappy woman. 'My son is doomed to die.'

'Elspat,' resumed the clergyman, 'he *was* doomed, and the sentence has been executed.'

The hapless mother threw her eyes up to heaven, and uttered a shriek so unlike the voice of a human being, that the eagle

which soared in middle air answered it as she would have done the call of her mate.

'It is impossible!' she exclaimed — 'it is impossible! Men do not condemn and kill on the same day! Thou art deceiving me. The people call thee holy, hast thou the heart to tell a mother she has murdered her only child?'

'God knows,' said the priest, the tears falling fast from his eyes, 'that, were it in my power, I would gladly tell better tidings. But these which I bear are as certain as they are fatal. My own ears heard the death-shot, my own eyes beheld thy son's death — thy son's funeral. My tongue bears witness to what my ears heard and my eyes saw.'

The wretched female clasped her hands close together, and held them up towards heaven like a sibyl announcing war and desolation, while, in impotent yet frightful rage, she poured forth a tide of the deepest imprecations. 'Base Saxon churl!' she exclaimed — 'vile, hypocritical juggler! May the eyes that looked tamely on the death of my fair-haired boy be melted in their sockets with ceaseless tears, shed for those that are nearest and most dear to thee! May the ears that heard his death-knell be dead hereafter to all other sounds save the screech of the raven and the hissing of the adder! May the tongue that tells me of his death and of my own crime be withered in thy mouth; or better, when thou wouldst pray with thy people, may the Evil One guide it, and give voice to blasphemies instead of blessings, until men shall fly in terror from thy presence, and the thunder of heaven be launched against thy head, and stop for ever thy cursing and accursed voice! Begone, with this malison! Elspat will never, never again bestow so many words upon living man.'

She kept her word: from that day the world was to her a wilderness, in which she remained without thought, care, or interest, absorbed in her own grief, indifferent to everything else.

With her mode of life, or rather of existence, the reader is already as far acquainted as I have the power of making him. Of her death, I can tell him nothing. It is supposed to have happened several years after she had attracted the attention of my excellent friend Mrs. Bethune Baliol. Her benevolence, which was never satisfied with dropping a sentimental tear when there was room for the operation of effective charity, induced her to make various attempts to alleviate the condition of this most wretched woman. But all her exertions could

only render Elspat's means of subsistence less precarious — a circumstance which, though generally interesting even to the most wretched outcasts, seemed to her a matter of total indifference. Every attempt to place any person in her hut to take charge of her miscarried, through the extreme resentment with which she regarded all intrusion on her solitude, or by the timidity of those who had been pitched upon to be inmates with the terrible Woman of the Tree. At length, when Elspat became totally unable (in appearance at least) to turn herself on the wretched settle which served her for a couch, the humanity of Mr. Tyrie's successor sent two women to attend upon the last moments of the solitary, which could not, it was judged, be far distant, and to avert the possibility that she might perish for want of assistance or food before she sunk under the effects of extreme age or mortal malady.

It was on a November evening that the two women appointed for this melancholy purpose arrived at the miserable cottage which we have already described. Its wretched inmate lay stretched upon the bed, and seemed almost already a lifeless corpse, save for the wandering of the fierce dark eyes, which rolled in their sockets in a manner terrible to look upon, and seemed to watch with surprise and indignation the motions of the strangers, as persons whose presence was alike unexpected and unwelcome. They were frightened at her looks; but, assured in each other's company, they kindled a fire, lighted a candle, prepared food, and made other arrangements for the discharge of the duty assigned them.

The assistants agreed they should watch the bedside of the sick person by turns; but, about midnight, overcome by fatigue, for they had walked far that morning, both of them fell fast asleep. When they awoke, which was not till after the interval of some hours, the hut was empty and the patient gone. They rose in terror, and went to the door of the cottage, which was latched as it had been at night. They looked out into the darkness, and called upon their charge by her name. The night-raven screamed from the old oak-tree, the fox howled on the hill, the hoarse waterfall replied with its echoes; but there was no human answer. The terrified women did not dare to make further search till morning should appear; for the sudden disappearance of a creature so frail as Elspat, together with the wild tenor of her history, intimidated them from stirring from the hut. They remained, therefore, in dreadful terror, sometimes thinking they heard her voice without, and at other

times, that sounds of a different description were mingled with the mournful sigh of the night-breeze, or the dash of the cascade. Sometimes, too, the latch rattled, as if some frail and impotent hand were in vain attempting to lift it, and ever and anon they expected the entrance of their terrible patient, animated by supernatural strength, and in the company, perhaps, of some being more dreadful than herself. Morning came at length. They sought brake, rock, and thicket in vain. Two hours after daylight, the minister himself appeared, and, on the report of the watchers, caused the country to be alarmed, and a general and exact search to be made through the whole neighbourhood of the cottage and the oak-tree. But it was all in vain. Elspat MacTavish was never found, whether dead or alive; nor could there ever be traced the slightest circumstance to indicate her fate.

The neighbourhood was divided concerning the cause of her disappearance. The credulous thought that the evil spirit, under whose influence she seemed to have acted, had carried her away in the body; and there are many who are still unwilling, at untimely hours, to pass the oak-tree, beneath which, as they allege, she may still be seen seated according to her wont. Others less superstitious supposed that, had it been possible to search the gulf of the 'corrie dhu,' the profound deeps of the lake, or the whelming eddies of the river, the remains of Elspat MacTavish might have been discovered; as nothing was more natural, considering her state of body and mind, than that she should have fallen in by accident, or precipitated herself intentionally into one or other of those places of sure destruction. The clergyman entertained an opinion of his own. He thought that, impatient of the watch which was placed over her, this unhappy woman's instinct had taught her, as it directs various domestic animals, to withdraw herself from the sight of her own race, that the death-struggle might take place in some secret den, where, in all probability, her mortal relics would never meet the eyes of mortals. This species of instinctive feeling seemed to him of a tenor with the whole course of her unhappy life, and most likely to influence her when it drew to a conclusion.

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION

TO THE

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

It has been suggested to the Author, that it might be well to reprint here a detailed account of the public dinner alluded to in the Introduction, as given in the newspapers of the time; and the reader is accordingly presented with the following extract from the *Edinburgh Weekly Journal* for Wednesday, 28th February 1827.

THEATRICAL FUND DINNER

Before proceeding with our account of this very interesting festival — for so it may be termed — it is our duty to present to our readers the following letter, which we have received from the president.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EDINBURGH WEEKLY JOURNAL

Sir — I am extremely sorry I have not leisure to correct the copy you sent me of what I am stated to have said at the Dinner for the Theatrical Fund. I am no orator, and upon such occasions as are alluded to I say as well as I can what the time requires.

However, I hope your reporter has been more accurate in other instances than in mine. I have corrected one passage, in which I am made to speak with great impropriety and petulance respecting the opinions of those who do not approve of dramatic entertainments. I have restored what I said, which was meant to be respectful, as every objection founded in conscience is, in my opinion, entitled to be so treated. Other errors I left as I found them, it being of little consequence whether I spoke sense or nonsense, in what was merely intended for the purpose of the hour.

I am, sir,

Your obedient servant,

Edinburgh, *Monday*. Walter Scott.

The Theatrical Fund Dinner, which took place on Friday in the Assembly Rooms, was conducted with admirable spirit. The Chairman, Sir Walter Scott, among his other great qualifications, is well fitted to enliven such an entertainment. His manners are extremely easy, and his style of speaking simple and natural, yet full of vivacity and point; and he has the art, if it be art, of relaxing into a certain homeliness of manner, without losing one particle of his dignity. He thus takes off some of that solemn formality which belongs to such meetings, and, by his easy and graceful familiarity, imparts

to them somewhat of the pleasing character of a private entertainment. Near Sir W. Scott sat the Earl of Fife, Lord Meadowbank, Sir John Hope of Pinkie, Bart., Admiral Adam, Baron Clerk Rattray, Gilbert Innes, Esq., James Walker, Esq., Robert Dundas, Esq., Alexander Smith, Esq., etc.

The cloth being removed, 'Non Nobis Domine' was sung by Messrs. Thorne, Swift, Collier, and Hartley, after which the following toasts were given from the chair: —

'The King' — all the honours.

'The Duke of Clarence and the Royal Family.'

The CHAIRMAN, in proposing the next toast, which he wished to be drunk in solemn silence, said it was to the memory of a regretted prince whom we had lately lost. Every individual would at once conjecture to whom he alluded. He had no intention to dwell on his military merits. They had been told in the senate; they had been repeated in the cottage; and whenever a soldier was the theme, his name was never far distant. But it was chiefly in connexion with the business of this meeting, which his late Royal Highness had condescended in a particular manner to patronise, that they were called on to drink his health. To that charity he had often sacrificed his time, and had given up the little leisure which he had from important business. He was always ready to attend on every occasion of this kind, and it was in that view that he proposed to drink to the memory of his late Royal Highness the Duke of York. — Drunk in solemn silence.

The CHAIRMAN then requested that gentlemen would fill a bumper as full as it would hold, while he would say only a few words. He was in the habit of hearing speeches, and he knew the feeling with which long ones were regarded. He was sure that it was perfectly unnecessary for him to enter into any vindication of the dramatic art, which they had come here to support. This, however, he considered to be the proper time and proper occasion for him to say a few words on that love of representation which was an innate feeling in human nature. It was the first amusement that the child had; it grew greater as he grew up; and, even in the decline of life, nothing amused so much as when a common tale is told with appropriate personification. The first thing a child does is to ape his schoolmaster by flogging a chair. The assuming a character ourselves, or the seeing others assume an imaginary character, is an enjoyment natural to humanity. It was implanted in our very nature to take pleasure from such representations, at proper times and on proper occasions. In all ages the theatrical art had kept pace with the improvement of mankind, and with the progress of letters and the fine arts. As man has advanced from the ruder stages of society, the love of dramatic representations has increased, and all works of this nature have been improved in character and in structure. They had only to turn their eyes to the history of ancient Greece, although he did not pretend to be very deeply versed in its ancient drama. Its first tragic poet commanded a body of troops at the battle of Marathon. Sophocles and Euripides were men of rank in Athens, when Athens was in its highest renown. They shook Athens with their discourses, as their theatrical works shook the theatre itself. If they turned to France in the time of Louis the Fourteenth, that era which is the classical history of that country, they would find that it was referred to by all Frenchmen as the golden age of the drama there. And also in England, in the time of Queen Elizabeth, the drama was at its highest pitch when the nation began to mingle deeply and wisely in the general politics of Europe, not only not receiving laws from others, but giving laws to the world, and vindicating the rights of mankind. (Cheers.) There have been various times when the dramatic art subsequently fell into disrepute. Its professors have been stigmatised; and laws have been passed against them, less dishonourable to them than to the statesmen by whom they were proposed, and to the legislators by whom they were adopted. What were the times in which these laws were passed? Was it not when virtue was seldom inculcated as a moral duty that we were required to relinquish the most rational of all our amuse

ments, when the clergy were enjoined celibacy, and when the laity were denied the right to read their Bibles? He thought that it must have been from a notion of penance that they erected the drama into an ideal place of profaneness, and spoke of the theatre as of the tents of sin. He did not mean to dispute that there were many excellent persons who thought differently from him, and he disclaimed the slightest idea of charging them with bigotry or hypocrisy on that account. He gave them full credit for their tender consciences in making these objections, although they did not appear relevant to him. But to these persons, being, as he believed them, men of worth and piety, he was sure the purpose of this meeting would furnish some apology for an error, if there be any, in the opinions of those who attend. They would approve the gift, although they might differ in other points. Such might not approve of going to the theatre, but at least could not deny that they might give away from their superfluity what was required for the relief of the sick, the support of the aged, and the comfort of the afflicted. These were duties enjoined by our religion itself. (Loud cheers.)

The performers are in a particular manner entitled to the support or regard, when in old age or distress, of those who had partaken of the amusements of those places which they render an ornament to society. Their art was of a peculiarly delicate and precarious nature. They had to serve a long apprenticeship. It was very long before even the first-rate geniuses could acquire the mechanical knowledge of the stage business. They must languish long in obscurity before they can avail themselves of their natural talents; and after that they have but a short space of time, during which they are fortunate if they can provide the means of comfort in the decline of life. That comes late, and lasts but a short time; after which they are left dependent. Their limbs fail, their teeth are loosened, the voice is lost, and they are left, after giving happiness to others, in a most disconsolate state. The public were liberal and generous to those deserving their protection. It was a sad thing to be dependent on the favour, or, he might say, in plain terms, on the caprice, of the public; and this more particularly for a class of persons of whom extreme prudence is not the character. There might be instances of opportunities being neglected; but let each gentleman tax himself, and consider the opportunities *they* had neglected, and the sums of money *they* had wasted; let every gentleman look into his own bosom, and say whether these were circumstances which would soften his own feelings, were he to be plunged into distress. He put it to every generous bosom —to every better feeling—to say what consolation was it to old age to be told that you might have made provision at a time which had been neglected (loud cheers); and to find it objected, that if you had pleased you might have been wealthy. He had hitherto been speaking of what, in theatrical language, was called 'stars,' but they were sometimes falling ones. There were another class of sufferers naturally and necessarily connected with the theatre, without whom it was impossible to go on. The sailors have a saying, 'Every man cannot be a boatswain.' If there must be a great actor to act Hamlet, there must also be people to act Laertes, the King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern, otherwise a drama cannot go on. If even Garrick himself were to rise from the dead, he could not act Hamlet alone. There must be generals, colonels, commanding-officers, subalterns. But what are the private soldiers to do? Many have mistaken their own talents, and have been driven in early youth to try the stage, to which they are not competent. He would know what to say to the indifferent poet and to the bad artist. He would say that it was foolish, and he would recommend to the poet to become a scribe, and the artist to paint sign-posts. (Loud laughter.) But you could not send the player adrift, for if he cannot play Hamlet, he must play Guildenstern. Where there are many labourers, wages must be low, and no man in such a situation can decently support a wife and family and save something off his income for old age. What is this man to do in latter life? Are you to cast him off like an old hinge or a piece of useless machinery

which has done its work? To a person who had contributed to our amusement this would be unkind, ungrateful, and unchristian. His wants are not of his own making, but arise from the natural sources of sickness and old age. It cannot be denied that there is one class of sufferers to whom no imprudence can be ascribed, except on first entering on the profession. After putting his hand to the dramatic plough he cannot draw back; but must continue at it, and toil, till death release him from want, or charity, by its milder influence, steps in to render that want more tolerable. He had little more to say, except that he sincerely hoped that the collection to-day, from the number of respectable gentlemen present, would meet the views entertained by the patrons. He hoped it would do so. They should not be disheartened. Though they could not do a great deal, they might do something. They had this consolation, that everything they parted with from their superfluity would do some good. They would sleep the better themselves when they have been the means of giving sleep to others. It was ungrateful and unkind that those who had sacrificed their youth to our amusement should not receive the reward due to them, but should be reduced to hard fare in their old age. We cannot think of poor Falstaff going to bed without his cup of sack, or Macbeth fed on bones as marrowless as those of Banquo. (Loud cheers and laughter.) As he believed that they were all as fond of the dramatic art as he was in his younger days, he would propose that they should drink 'The Theatrical Fund,' with three times three.

Mr. MACKAY rose, on behalf of his brethren, to return their thanks for the toast just drunk. Many of the gentlemen present, he said, were perhaps not fully acquainted with the natur and intention of the institution, and it might not be amiss to enter into some explanation on the subject. With whomsoever the idea of a Theatrical Fund might have originated (and it had been disputed by the surviving relatives of two or three individuals), certain it was that the first legally constituted Theatrical Fund owed its origin to one of the brightest ornaments of the profession, the late David Garrick. That eminent actor conceived that, by a weekly subscription in the theatre, a fund might be raised among its members, from which a portion might be given to those of his less fortunate brethren, and thus an opportunity would be offered for prudence to provide what fortune had denied — a comfortable provision for the winter of life. With the welfare of his profession constantly at heart, the zeal with which he laboured to uphold its respectability, and to impress upon the minds of his brethren not only the necessity, but the blessing, of independence, the fund became his peculiar care. He drew up a form of laws for its government, procured, at his own expense, the passing of an Act of Parliament for its confirmation, bequeathed to it a handsome legacy, and thus became the father of the Drury Lane Fund. So constant was his attachment to this infant establishment, that he chose to grace the close of the brightest theatrical life on record by the last display of his transcendent talent on the occasion of a benefit for this child of his adoption, which ever since has gone by the name of the Garrick Fund. In imitation of his noble example, funds had been established in several provincial theatres in England; but it remained for Mrs. Henry Siddons and Mr. William Murray to become the founders of the first Theatrical Fund in Scotland. (Cheers.) This fund commenced under the most favourable auspices: it was liberally supported by the management, and highly patronised by the public. Notwithstanding, it fell short in the accomplishment of its intentions. What those intentions were, he (Mr. Mackay) need not recapitulate; but they failed, and he did not hesitate to confess that a want of energy on the part of the performers was the probable cause. A new set of rules and regulations were lately drawn up, submitted to and approved of at a general meeting of the members of the theatre; and accordingly the fund was remodelled on the 1st of January last. And here he thought he did but echo the feelings of his brethren by publicly acknowledging the obligations they were under to the management for the aid given,

and the warm interest they had all along taken in the welfare of the fund. (Cheers.) The nature and object of the profession had been so well treated of by the president, that he would say nothing; but of the numerous offspring of science and genius that court precarious fame, the actor boasts the slenderest claim of all: the sport of fortune, the creatures of fashion, and the victims of caprice, they are seen, heard, and admired, but to be forgot. They leave no trace, no memorial of their existence; they 'come like shadows, so depart.' (Cheers.) Yet, humble though their pretensions be, there was no profession, trade, or calling where such a combination of requisites, mental and bodily, were indispensable. In all others the principal may practise after he has been visited by the afflicting hand of Providence — some by the loss of limb, some of voice, and many, when the faculty of the mind is on the wane, may be assisted by dutiful children or devoted servants. Not so the actor: he must retain all he ever did possess, or sink dejected to a mournful home. (Applause.) Yet, while they are toiling for ephemeral theatric fame, how very few ever possess the means of hoarding in their youth that which would give bread in old age! But now a brighter prospect dawned upon them, and to the success of this their infant establishment they looked with hope, as to a comfortable and peaceful home in their declining years. He concluded by tendering to the meeting, in the name of his brethren and sisters, their unfeigned thanks for their liberal support, and begged to propose the health of the patrons of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund. (Cheers.)

Lord MEADOWBANK said, that by desire of his hon. friend in the chair, and of his noble friend at his right hand, he begged leave to return thanks for the honour which had been conferred on the patrons of this excellent institution. He could answer for himself — he could answer for them all — that they were deeply impressed with the meritorious objects which it has in view, and of their anxious wish to promote its interests. For himself, he hoped he might be permitted to say that he was rather surprised at finding his own name as one of the patrons, associated with so many individuals of high rank and powerful influence. But it was an excuse for those who had placed him in a situation so honourable and so distinguished, that when this charity was instituted he happened to hold a high and responsible station under the crown, when he might have been of use in assisting and promoting its objects. His lordship much feared that he could have little expectation, situated as he now was, of doing either; but he could confidently assert that few things would give him greater gratification than being able to contribute to its prosperity and support; and, indeed, when one recollects the pleasure which at all periods of life he has received from the exhibitions of the stage, and the exertions of the meritorious individuals for whose aid this fund has been established, he must be divested both of gratitude and feeling who would not give his best endeavours to promote its welfare. And now, that he might in some measure repay the gratification which had been afforded himself, he would beg leave to propose a toast, the health of one of the patrons, a great and distinguished individual, whose name must always stand by itself, and which, in an assembly such as this, or in any other assembly of Scotsmen, can never be received (not, he would say, with ordinary feelings of pleasure or of delight), but with those of rapture and enthusiasm. In doing so, he felt that he stood in a somewhat new situation. Whoever had been called upon to propose the health of his hon. friend to whom he alluded, some time ago, would have found himself enabled, from the mystery in which certain matters were involved, to gratify himself and his auditors by allusions which found a responding chord in their own feelings, and to deal in the language — the sincere language, of panegyric, without intruding on the modesty of the great individual to whom he referred. But it was no longer possible, consistently with the respect to one's auditors, to use upon this subject terms either of mystification or of obscure or indirect allusion. The clouds have been dispelled, the *darkness visible* has been cleared away, and the Great Unknown — the minstrel of

our native land — the mighty magician who has rolled back the current of time, and conjured up before our living senses the men and the manners of days which have long passed away, stands revealed to the hearts and the eyes of his affectionate and admiring countrymen. If he himself were capable of imagining all that belonged to this mighty subject, were he even able to give utterance to all that as a friend, as a man, and as a Scotsman he must feel regarding it, yet knowing, as he well did, that this illustrious individual was not more distinguished for his towering talents than for those feelings which rendered such allusions ungrateful to himself, however sparingly introduced, he would, on that account, still refrain from doing that which would otherwise be no less pleasing to him than to his audience. But this his lordship hoped he would be allowed to say (his auditors would not pardon him were he to say less), we owe to him, as a people, a large and heavy debt of gratitude. He it is who has opened to foreigners the grand and characteristic beauties of our country. It is to him that we owe that our gallant ancestors and the struggles of our illustrious patriots, who fought and bled in order to obtain and secure that independence and that liberty we now enjoy, have obtained a fame no longer confined to the boundaries of a remote and comparatively obscure nation, and who has called down upon their struggles for glory and freedom the admiration of foreign countries. He it is who has conferred a new reputation on our national character, and bestowed on Scotland an imperishable name, were it only by her having given birth to himself. (Loud and rapturous applause.)

Sir WALTER SCOTT certainly did not think that, in coming here to-day, he would have the task of acknowledging, before 300 gentlemen, a secret which, considering that it was communicated to more than twenty people, had been remarkably well kept. He was now before the bar of his country, and might be understood to be on trial before Lord Meadowbank as an offender; yet he was sure that every impartial jury would bring in a verdict of Not Proven. He did not now think it necessary to enter into the reasons of his long silence. Perhaps caprice might have a considerable share in it. He had now to say, however, that the merits of these works, if they had any, and their faults, were entirely imputable to himself. (Long and loud cheering.) He was afraid to think on what he had done. 'Look on 't again I dare not.' He had thus far unbosomed himself, and he knew that it would be reported to the public. He meant, then, seriously to state, that when he said he was the author, he was the total and undivided author. With the exception of quotations, there was not a single word that was not derived from himself, or suggested in the course of his reading. The wand was now broken, and the book buried. You will allow me further to say, with Prospero, it is your breath that has filled my sails, and to crave one single toast in the capacity of the author of these novels; and he would dedicate a bumper to the health of one who has represented some of those characters, of which he had endeavoured to give the skeleton, with a degree of liveliness which rendered him grateful. He would propose the health of his friend Bailie Nicol Jarvie — (loud applause) — and he was sure that, when the Author of *Waverley* and *Rob Roy* drinks to Nicol Jarvie, it would be received with that degree of applause to which that gentleman has always been accustomed, and that they would take care that on the present occasion it should be PRODIGIOUS! (Long and vehement applause.)

Mr. MACKAY, who here spoke with great humour in the character of Bailie Jarvie. — My conscience! My worthy father the deacon could not have believed that his son could hae had sic a compliment paid to him by the Great Unknown!

Sir WALTER SCOTT. — The Small Known now, Mr. Bailie.

Mr. MACKAY. — He had been long identified with the Bailie, and he was vain of the cognomen which he had now worn for eight years; and he questioned if any of his brethren in the council had given such universal satisfaction. (Loud laughter and applause.) Before he sat down he begged to propose 'The Lord Provost and the City of Edinburgh.'

Sir WALTER SCOTT apologised for the absence of the Lord Provost, who had gone to London on public business.

Tune — 'Within a mile of Edinburgh town.'

Sir WALTER SCOTT gave 'The Duke of Wellington and the army.'

Glee — 'How merrily we live.'

'Lord Melville and the Navy, that fought till they left nobody to fight with, like an arch sportsman who clears all and goes after the game.'

Mr. PAT. ROBERTSON. — They had heard this evening a toast which had been received with intense delight, which will be published in every newspaper, and will be hailed with joy by all Europe. He had one toast assigned him which he had great pleasure in giving. He was sure that the stage had in all ages a great effect on the morals and manners of the people. It was very desirable that the stage should be well regulated; and there was no criterion by which its regulation could be better determined than by the moral character and personal respectability of the performers. He was not one of those stern moralists who objected to the theatre. The most fastidious moralist could not possibly apprehend any injury from the stage of Edinburgh, as it was presently managed, and so long as it was adorned by that illustrious individual, Mrs. Henry Siddons, whose public exhibitions were not more remarkable for feminine grace and delicacy than was her private character for every virtue which could be admired in domestic life. He would conclude with reciting a few words from Shakspeare, in a spirit not of contradiction to those stern moralists who disliked the theatre, but of meekness: — 'Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed? do you hear, let them be well used, for they are the abstract and brief chronicles of the time.' He then gave 'Mrs. Henry Siddons, and success to the Theatre-Royal of Edinburgh.'

Mr. MURRAY. — Gentlemen, I rise to return thanks for the honour you have done Mrs. Siddons, in doing which I am somewhat difficulted, from the extreme delicacy which attends a brother's expatiating upon a sister's claims to honours publicly paid — (hear, hear) — yet, gentlemen, your kindness emboldens me to say, that were I to give utterance to all a brother's feelings, I should not exaggerate those claims. (Loud applause.) I therefore, gentlemen, thank you most cordially for the honour you have done her, and shall now request permission to make an observation on the establishment of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund. Mr. Mackay has done Mrs. Henry Siddons and myself the honour to ascribe the establishment to us; but no, gentlemen, it owes its origin to a higher source — the publication of the novel of *Rob Roy* — the unprecedented success of the opera adapted from that popular production. (Hear, hear.) It was that success which relieved the Edinburgh Theatre from its difficulties, and enabled Mrs. Siddons to carry into effect the establishment of a fund she had long desired, but was prevented from effecting, from the unsettled state of her theatrical concerns. I therefore hope that, in future years, when the aged and infirm actor derives relief from this fund, he will, in the language of the gallant Highlander, 'Cast his eye to good old Scotland, and not forget Rob Roy.' (Loud applause.)

Sir WALTER SCOTT here stated, that Mrs. Siddons wanted the means but not the will of beginning the Theatrical Fund. He here alluded to the great merits of Mr. Murray's management, and to his merits as an actor, which were of the first order, and of which every person who attends the theatre must be sensible; and after alluding to the embarrassments with which the theatre had been at one period threatened, he concluded by giving the health of Mr. Murray, which was drunk with three times three.

Mr. MURRAY. — Gentlemen, I wish I could believe that, in any degree, I merited the compliments with which it has pleased Sir Walter Scott to preface the proposal of my health, or the very flattering manner in which you have done me the honour to receive it. The approbation of such an assembly is most gratifying to me, and might encourage feelings of vanity,

were not such feelings crushed by my conviction, that no man holding the situation I have so long held in Edinburgh could have failed placed in the peculiar circumstances in which I have been placed. Gentlemen, I shall not insult your good taste by eulogiums upon your judgment or kindly feeling; though to the first I owe any improvement I may have made as an actor, and certainly my success as a manager to the second. (Applause.) When, upon the death of my dear brother the late Mr. Siddons, it was proposed that I should undertake the management of the Edinburgh Theatre, I confess I drew back, doubting my capability to free it from the load of debt and difficulty with which it was surrounded. In this state of anxiety, I solicited the advice of one who had ever honoured me with his kindest regard, and whose name no member of my profession can pronounce without feelings of the deepest respect and gratitude — I allude to the late Mr. John Kemble. (Great applause.) To him I applied; and with the repetition of his advice I shall cease to trespass upon your time — (hear, hear) — 'My dear William, fear not; integrity and assiduity must prove an overmatch for all difficulty; and though I approve your not indulging a vain confidence in your own ability, and viewing with respectful apprehension the judgment of the audience you have to act before, yet be assured that judgment will ever be tempered by the feeling that you are acting for the widow and the fatherless.' (Loud applause.) Gentlemen, those words have never passed from my mind; and I feel convinced that you have pardoned my many errors from the feeling that I was striving for the widow and the fatherless. (Long and enthusiastic applause followed Mr. Murray's address.)

Sir WALTER SCOTT gave the health of the Stewards.

Mr. VANDENHOFF. — Mr. President and gentlemen, the honour conferred upon the Stewards, in the very flattering compliment you have just paid us, calls forth our warmest acknowledgments. In tendering you our thanks for the approbation you have been pleased to express of our humble exertions, I would beg leave to advert to the cause in which we have been engaged. Yet, surrounded as I am by the genius, the eloquence of this enlightened city, I cannot but feel the presumption which ventures to address you on so interesting a subject. Accustomed to speak in the language of others, I feel quite at a loss for terms wherein to clothe the sentiments excited by the present occasion. (Applause.) The nature of the institution which has sought your fostering patronage, and the objects which it contemplates, have been fully explained to you. But, gentlemen, the relief which it proposes is not a gratuitous relief, but to be purchased by the individual contribution of its members towards the general good. This fund lends no encouragement to idleness or improvidence; but it offers an opportunity to prudence, in vigour and youth, to make provision against the evening of life and its attendant infirmity. A period is fixed, at which we admit the plea of age as an exemption from professional labour. It is painful to behold the veteran on the stage (compelled by necessity) contending against physical decay, mocking the joyousness of mirth with the feebleness of age, when the energies decline, when the memory fails, and 'the big manly voice, turning again towards childish treble, pipes and whistles in the sound.' We would remove him from the mimic scene, where fiction constitutes the charm; we would not view old age caricaturing itself. (Applause.) But as our means may be found, in time of need, inadequate to the fulfilment of our wishes — fearful of raising expectations which we may be unable to gratify — desirous not 'to keep the word of promise to the ear and break it to the hope' — we have presumed to court the assistance of the friends of the drama to strengthen our infant institution. Our appeal has been successful beyond our most sanguine expectations. The distinguished patronage conferred on us by your presence on this occasion, and the substantial support which your benevolence has so liberally afforded to our institution, must impress every member of the fund with the most

grateful sentiments — sentiments which no language can express, no time obliterate. (Applause.) I will not trespass longer on your attention. I would the task of acknowledging our obligation had fallen into abler hands. (Hear, hear.) In the name of the Stewards, I most respectfully and cordially thank you for the honour you have done us, which greatly overpays our poor endeavours. (Applause.)

This speech, though rather inadequately reported, was one of the best delivered on this occasion. That it was creditable to Mr. Vandenhoff's taste and feelings, the preceding sketch will show; but how much it was so, it does *not* show.

Mr. J. CAY gave 'Professor Wilson and the University of Edinburgh, of which he was one of the brightest ornaments.'

Lord MEADOWBANK, after a suitable eulogium, gave 'The Earl of Fife,' which was drunk with three times three.

Earl FIFE expressed his high gratification at the honour conferred on him. He intimated his approbation of the institution, and his readiness to promote its success by every means in his power. He concluded with giving 'The health of the Company of Edinburgh.'

Mr. JONES, on rising to return thanks, being received with considerable applause, said he was truly grateful for the kind encouragement he had experienced, but the novelty of the situation in which he now was renewed all the feelings he experienced when he first saw himself announced in the bills as a young gentleman, being his first appearance on any stage. (Laughter and applause.) Although in the presence of those whose indulgence had, in another sphere, so often shielded him from the penalties of inability, he was unable to execute the task which had so unexpectedly devolved upon him in behalf of his brethren and himself. He therefore begged the company to imagine all that grateful hearts could prompt the most eloquent to utter, and that would be a copy of their feelings. (Applause.) He begged to trespass another moment on their attention, for the purpose of expressing the thanks of the members of the fund to the gentlemen of the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians, who, finding that this meeting was appointed to take place on the same evening with their concert, had in the handsomest manner agreed to postpone it. Although it was his duty thus to preface the toast he had to propose, he was certain the meeting required no farther inducement, than the recollection of the pleasure the exertions of those gentlemen had often afforded them within those walls, to join heartily in drinking 'Health and prosperity to the Edinburgh Professional Society of Musicians.' (Applause.)

Mr. PAT. ROBERTSON proposed 'The health of Mr. Jeffrey,' whose absence was owing to indisposition. The public was well aware that he was the most distinguished advocate at the bar; he was likewise distinguished for the kindness, frankness, and cordial manner in which he communicated with the junior members of the profession, to the esteem of whom his splendid talents would always entitle him.

Mr. J. MACONOCHIE gave 'The health of Mrs. Siddons, senior — the most distinguished ornament of the stage.'

Sir W. SCOTT said, that if anything could reconcile him to old age, it was the reflection that he had seen the rising as well as the setting sun of Mrs. Siddons. He remembered well their breakfasting near to the theatre, waiting the whole day, the crushing at the doors at six o'clock, and their going in and counting their fingers till seven o'clock. But the very first step, the very first word which she uttered, was sufficient to overpay him for all his labours. The house was literally electrified; and it was only from witnessing the effects of her genius that he could guess to what a pitch theatrical excellence could be carried. Those young gentlemen who have only seen the setting sun of this distinguished performer, beautiful and serene as that was, must give us old fellows, who have seen its rise and its meridian, leave to hold our heads a little higher.

Mr. DUNDAS gave 'The memory of Home, the author of *Douglas*.'

Mr. MACKAY here announced that the subscription for the night amounted to £280; and he expressed gratitude for this substantial proof of their kindness.

We are happy to state that subscriptions have since flowed in very liberally.

Mr. MACKAY here entertained the company with a pathetic song.

Sir WALTER SCOTT apologised for having so long forgotten their native land. He would now give 'Scotland, the land of Cakes.' He would give every river, every loch, every hill, from Tweed to Johnnie Groat's house; every lass in her cottage and countess in her castle; and may her sons stand by her, as their fathers did before them, and he who would not drink a bumper to his toast, may he never drink whisky more!

Sir WALTER SCOTT here gave 'Lord Meadowbank,' who returned thanks.

Mr. H. G. BELL said, that he should not have ventured to intrude himself upon the attention of the assembly, did he not feel confident that the toast he begged to have the honour to propose would make amends for the very imperfect manner in which he might express his sentiments regarding it. It had been said that, notwithstanding the mental supremacy of the present age, notwithstanding that the page of our history was studded with names destined also for the page of immortality — that the genius of Shakspeare was extinct, and the fountain of his inspiration dried up. It might be that these observations were unfortunately correct, or it might be that we were bewildered with a name, not disappointed of the reality; for though Shakspeare had brought a Hamlet, an Othello, and a Macbeth, an Ariel, a Juliet, and a Rosalind upon the stage were there not authors living who had brought as varied, as exquisite., painted, and as undying a range of characters into our hearts? The shape of the mere mould into which genius poured its golden treasures was surely a matter of little moment — let it be called a tragedy, a comedy, or a Waverley novel. But, even among the dramatic authors of the present day, he was unwilling to allow that there was a great and palpable decline from the glory of preceding ages, and his toast alone would bear him out in denying the truth of the proposition. After eulogising the names of Baillie, Byron, Coleridge, Maturin, and others, he begged to have the honour of proposing the health of James Sheridan Knowles.

Sir WALTER SCOTT. — Gentlemen, I crave a bumper all over. The last toast reminds me of a neglect of duty. Unaccustomed to a public duty of this kind, errors in conducting the ceremonial of it may be excused and omissions pardoned. Perhaps I have made one or two omissions in the course of the evening, for which I trust you will grant me your pardon and indulgence. One thing in particular I have omitted, and I would now wish to make amends for it, by a libation of reverence and respect to the memory of SHAKSPEARE. He was a man of universal genius, and from a period soon after his own era to the present day he has been universally idolised. When I come to his honoured name, I am like the sick man who hung up his crutches at the shrine, and was obliged to confess that he did not walk better than before. It is indeed difficult, gentlemen, to compare him to any other individual. The only one to whom I can at all compare him is the wonderful Arabian dervise, who dived into the body of each, and in this way became familiar with the thoughts and secrets of their hearts. He was a man of obscure origin, and, as a player, limited in his acquirements, but he was born evidently with a universal genius. His eyes glanced at all the varied aspects of life, and his fancy portrayed with equal talents the king on the throne and the clown who crackles his chestnuts at a Christmas fire. Whatever note he takes, he strikes it just and true, and awakens a corresponding chord in our own bosoms. Gentlemen, I propose 'The memory of William Shakspeare.'

Glee — 'Lightly tread, 't is hallowed ground.'

After the glee, Sir Walter rose, and begged to propose as a toast the health of a lady whose living merit is not a little honourable to Scotland. The toast (said he) is also flattering to the national vanity of a Scotchman, as the lady whom I intend to propose is a native of this country. From the public her works have met with the most favourable reception. One piece of hers, in particular, was often acted here of late years, and gave pleasure of no mean kind to many brilliant and fashionable audiences. In her private character she (he begged leave to say) is as remarkable as in a public sense she is for her genius. In short, he would in one word name—'Joanna Baillie.'

This health being drunk, Mr. Thorne was called on for a song, and sung, with great taste and feeling, 'The Anchor 's weighed.'

W. MENZIES, Esq., advocate, rose to propose the health of a gentleman for many years connected at intervals with the dramatic art in Scotland. Whether we look at the range of characters he performs or at the capacity which he evinces in executing those which he undertakes, he is equally to be admired. In all his parts he is unrivalled. The individual to whom he alluded is (said he) well known to the gentlemen present, in the characters of Malvolio, Lord Ogleby, and the Green Man; and, in addition to his other qualities, he merits, for his perfection in these characters, the grateful sense of this meeting. He would wish, in the first place, to drink his health as an actor; but he was not less estimable in domestic life, and as a private gentleman; and when he announced him as one whom the Chairman had honoured with his friendship, he was sure that all present would cordially join him in drinking 'The health of Mr. Terry.'

Mr. WILLIAM ALLAN, banker, said, that he did not rise with the intention of making a speech. He merely wished to contribute in a few words to the mirth of the evening—an evening which certainly had not passed off without some blunders. It had been understood—at least he had learnt or supposed, from the expressions of Mr. Pritchard—that it would be sufficient to put a paper, with the name of the contributor, into the box, and that the gentleman thus contributing would be called on for the money next morning. He, for his part, had committed a blunder, but it might serve as a caution to those who may be present at the dinner of next year. He had merely put in his name, written on a slip of paper, without the money. But he would recommend that, as some of the gentlemen might be in the same situation, the box should be again sent round, and he was confident that they, as well as he, would redeem their error.

Sir WALTER SCOTT said, that the meeting was somewhat in the situation of Mrs. Anne Page, who had £300 and possibilities. We have already got, said he, £280, but I should like, I confess, to have the £300. He would gratify himself by proposing the health of an honourable person, the Lord Chief Baron, whom England has sent to us, and connecting with it that of his 'yoke-fellow on the bench,' as Shakspeare says, Mr. Baron Clerk—'The Court of Exchequer.'

Mr. BARON CLERK regretted the absence of his learned brother. None, he was sure, could be more generous in his nature, or more ready to help a Scottish purpose.

Sir WALTER SCOTT. — There is one who ought to be remembered on this occasion. He is, indeed, well entitled to our grateful recollection—one, in short, to whom the drama in this city owes much. He succeeded, not without trouble, and perhaps at some considerable sacrifice, in establishing a theatre. The younger part of the company may not recollect the theatre to which I allude; but there are some who with me may remember by name a place called Carrubber's Close. There Allan Ramsay established his little theatre. His own pastoral was not fit for the stage, but it has its admirers in those who love the Doric language in which it is written; and it is not without merits of a very peculiar kind. But, laying aside all considerations of his literary merit, Allan was a good, jovial, honest fellow, who could crack a bottle with the best. 'The memory of Allan Ramsay.'

Mr. MURRAY, on being requested, sung 'T was merry in the hall,' and at the conclusion was greeted with repeated rounds of applause.

Mr. JONES. — One omission I conceive has been made. The cause of the fund has been ably advocated, but it is still susceptible, in my opinion, of an additional charm —

> Without the smile from partial beauty won,
> Oh, what were man? — a world without a sun!

And there would not be a darker spot in poetry than would be the corner in Shakspeare Square if, like its fellow, the Register Office, the theatre were deserted by the ladies. They are, in fact, our most attractive stars. 'The Patronesses of the Theatre — the ladies of the city of Edinburgh.' This toast I ask leave to drink with all the honours which conviviality can confer.

Mr. PATRICK ROBERTSON would be the last man willingly to introduce any topic calculated to interrupt the harmony of the evening; yet he felt himself treading upon ticklish ground when he approached the region of the Nor' Loch. He assured the company, however, that he was not about to enter on the subject of the improvement bill. They all knew, that if the public were unanimous — if the consent of all parties were obtained — if the rights and interests of everybody were therein attended to, saved, reserved, respected, and excepted — if everybody agreed to it — and finally, a most essential point, if nobody opposed it — then, and in that case, and provided also that due intimation were given — the bill in question might pass — would pass — or might, could, would, or should pass — all expenses being defrayed. (Laughter.) He was the advocate of neither champion, and would neither avail himself of the absence of the Right Hon. the Lord Provost nor take advantage of the non-appearance of his friend, Mr. Cockburn. (Laughter.) But, in the midst of these civic broils, there had been elicited a ray of hope, that, at some future period, in Bereford Park, or some other place, if all parties were consulted and satisfied, and if intimation were duly made at the kirk doors of all the parishes in Scotland, in terms of the statute in that behalf provided, the people of Edinburgh might by possibility get a new theatre. (Cheers and laughter.) But wherever the belligerent powers might be pleased to set down this new theatre, he was sure they all hoped to meet the Old Company in it. He should therefore propose, 'Better accommodation to the Old Company in the new theatre, site unknown.' Mr. Robertson's speech was most humorously given, and he sat down amidst loud cheers and laughter.

Sir WALTER SCOTT. — Wherever the new theatre is built, I hope it will not be large. There are two errors which we commonly commit — the one arising from our pride, the other from our poverty. If there are twelve plans, it is odds but the largest, without any regard to comfort, or an eye to the probable expense, is adopted. There was the College projected on this scale, and undertaken in the same manner, and who shall see the end of it? It has been building all my life, and may probably last during the lives of my children, and my children's children. Let not the same prophetic hymn be sung, when we commence a new theatre, which was performed on the occasion of laying the foundation-stone of a certain edifice, 'Behold the endless work begun.' Play-going folks should attend somewhat to convenience. The new theatre should, in the first place, be such as may be finished in eighteen months or two years; and, in the second place, it should be one in which we can hear our old friends with comfort. It is better that a moderate-sized house should be crowded now and then than to have a large theatre with benches continually empty, to the discouragement of the actors and the discomfort of the spectators. (Applause.) He then commented in flattering terms on the genius of Mackenzie and his private worth, and concluded by proposing 'The health of Henry Mackenzie, Esq.'

Immediately afterwards he said: Gentlemen, it is now wearing late, and I shall request permission to retire. Like Partridge I may say, 'non sum *qualis eram*.' At my time of day, I can agree with Lord Ogleby as to his rheumatism, and say, 'There 's a twinge.' I hope, therefore, you will excuse me for leaving the chair.

The worthy baronet then retired amidst long, loud, and rapturous cheering.

Mr. PATRICK ROBERTSON was then called to the chair by common acclamation.

Gentlemen, said Mr. ROBERTSON, I take the liberty of asking you to fill a bumper to th very brim. There is not one of us who will not remember, while he lives, being present at this day's festival, and the declaration made this night by the gentleman who has just left the chair. That declaration has rent the veil from the features of the Great Unknown—a name which must now merge in the name of the Great Known. It will be henceforth coupled with the name of SCOTT, which will become familiar like a household word. We have heard the confession from his own immortal lips (cheering), and we cannot dwell with too much, or too fervent, praise on the merits of the greatest man whom Scotland has produced.

After which, several other toasts were given, and Mr. Robertson left the room about half-past eleven. A few choice spirits, however, rallied round Captain Broadhead of the 7th Hussars, who was called to the chair, and the festivity was prolonged till an early hour on Saturday morning.

The band of the theatre occupied the gallery, and that of the 7th Hussars the end of the room, opposite the chair, whose performances were greatly admired. It is but justice to Mr. Gibb to state, that the dinner was very handsome, though slowly served in, and the wines good. The attention of the stewards was exemplary. Mr. Murray and Mr. Vandenhoff, with great good taste, attended on Sir Walter Scott's right and left, and we know that he has expressed himself much gratified by their anxious politeness and sedulity.

NOTES

Note 1. — Taunt of Effeminacy, p. 7

It is said in Highland tradition that one of the Macdonalds of the Isles, who had suffered his broadsword to remain sheathed for some months after his marriage with a beautiful woman, was stirred to a sudden and furious expedition against the mainland by hearing conversation to the same purpose [as in the text] among his body-guard.

Note 2. — Welsh Houses, p. 8

The Welsh houses, like those of the cognate tribes in Ireland and in the Highlands of Scotland, were very imperfectly supplied with chimneys. Hence, in the *History of the Gwydir Family*, the striking expression of a Welsh chieftain, who, the house being assaulted and set on fire by his enemies, exhorted his friends to stand to their defence, saying, he had seen as much smoke in the hall upon a Christmas even.

Note 3. — Eudorchawg, p. 8

These were the distinguished marks of rank and valour among the numerous tribes of Celtic extraction. Manlius, the Roman champion, gained the name of Torquatus, or He of the Chain, on account of an ornament of this kind, won in single combat from a gigantic Gaul. Aneurin, the Welsh bard, mentions, in his poem on the battle of Cattreath, that no less than three hundred of the British who fell there had their necks wreathed with the eudorchawg. This seems to infer that the chain was a badge of distinction, and valour perhaps, but not of royalty; otherwise there would scarce have been so many kings present in one battle. This chain has been found accordingly in Ireland and Wales, and sometimes, though more rarely, in Scotland. Doubtless it was of too precious materials not to be usually converted into money by the enemy into whose hands it fell.

Note 4. — Foot-pages, p. 9

See *Madoc* [Part I. 1] for this literal foot-page's office and duties. Mr. Southey's notes inform us: 'The foot-bearer shall hold the feet of the king in his lap, from the time when he reclines at the board till he goes to rest, and he shall chafe them with a towel; and during all that time he shall watch that no hurt shall happen to the king. He shall eat of the same dish from which the king takes his food . . . he shall light the first candle before the king at his meal.' Such are the instructions given for

this part of royal ceremonial in the laws of Howell Dha. It may be added, that probably upon this Celtic custom was founded one of those absurd and incredible representations which were propagated at the time of the French Revolution, to stir up the peasants against their feudal superiors. It was pretended that some feudal seigneurs asserted their right to kill and disembowel a peasant, in order to put their own feet within the expiring body, and so recover them from the chill.

Note 5. — Courage of the Welsh, p. 35

This is by no means exaggerated in the text. A very honourable testimony was given to their valour by King Henry I. in a letter to the Greek Emperor, Emanuel Comnenus. This prince having desired that an account might be sent him of all that was remarkable in the island of Great Britain, Henry, in answer to that request, was pleased to take notice, among other particulars, of the extraordinary courage and fierceness of the Welsh, who were not afraid to fight unarmed with enemies armed at all points, valiantly shedding their blood in the cause of their country, and purchasing glory at the expense of their lives.

Note 6. — Selling Meat by Measure, p. 56

Old Henry Jenkins, in his recollections of the abbacies before their dissolution, has preserved the fact that roast-beef was delivered out to the guests not by weight, but by measure.

Note 7. — Welsh Bowmen, p. 66

The Welsh were excellent bowmen; but, under favour of Lord Lyttleton, they probably did not use the long-bow, the formidable weapon of the Normans, and afterwards of the English yeomen. That of the Welsh most likely rather resembled the bow of the cognate Celtic tribes of Ireland and of the Highlands of Scotland. It was shorter than the Norman long-bow, as being drawn to the breast, not to the ear, more loosely strung, and the arrow having a heavy iron head; altogether, in short, a less effective weapon. It appears from the following anecdote that there was a difference between the Welsh arrows and those of the English.

In 1122 [1121], Henry I., marching into Powys Land to chastise Meredyth ap Blethyn and certain rebels, in passing a defile was struck by an arrow on the breast. Repelled by the excellence of his breastplate, the shaft fell to the ground. When the King felt the blow and saw the shaft, he swore his usual oath, by the death of our Lord, that the arrow came not from a Welsh, but an English bow; and, influenced by this belief, hastily put an end to the war.

Note 8. — Rattle of Armour, p. 76

Even the sharp and angry clang made by the iron scabbards of modern cavalry ringing against the steel-tipped saddles and stirrup betrays their approach from a distance. The clash of the armour of knights, armed *cap-à-pie*, must have been much more easily discernible.

Note 9. — Cruelties of the Welsh, p. 89

The Welsh, a fierce and barbarous people, were often accused of mangling the bodies of their slain antagonists. Every one must remember Shakspeare's account, how

> The noble Mortimer
> Leading the men of Herefordshire to fight
> Against the irregular and wild Glendower,
> Was, by the rude hands of that Welshman, taken,
> And a thousand of his people butcher'd;
> Upon whose dead corpse there was such misuse,
> Such beastly shameless transformation,
> By those Welshwomen done, as may not be,
> Without much shame, retold or spoken of.

Note 10. — Bahr-Geist, p. 128

The idea of the bahr-geist was taken from a passage in the *Memoirs* [pp. 83-86, 1829] of Lady Fanshaw, which have since been given to the public, and received with deserved approbation.

The original runs as follows. Lady Fanshaw, shifting among her friends in Ireland, like other sound loyalists of the period, tells her story thus: —

From hence we went to the Lady Honor O'Brien's, a lady that went for a maid, but few believed it. She was the youngest daughter of the Earl of Thomond. There we staid three nights — the first of which I was surprised by being laid in a chamber, when about one o'clock, I heard a voice that wakened me. I drew the curtain, and in the casement of the window I saw, by the light of the moon, a woman leaning through the casement into the window, in white, with red hair and pale and ghastly complexion. She spoke loud, and in a tone I had never heard, thrice, 'A horse'; and then, with a sigh more like the wind than breath, she vanished, and to me her body looked more like a thick cloud than substance. I was so much frightened that my hair stood on end, and my night-clothes fell off. I pulled and pinched your father, who never woke during the disorder I was in, but at last was much surprised to see me in this fright, and more so when I related the story and showed him the window opened. Neither of us slept any more that night; but he entertained me with telling me how much more these apparitions were usual in this country than in England; and we concluded the cause to be the great superstition of the Irish, and the want of that knowing faith which should defend them from the power of the devil, which he exercises among them very much. About five o'clock the lady of the house came to see us, saying she had not been in bed all night, because a cousin O'Brien of hers, whose ancestors had owned that house, had desired her to stay with him in his chamber, and that he died at two o'clock; and she said, 'I wish you to have had no disturbance, for 'tis the custom of the place that, when any of the family are dying, the shape of a woman appears every night in the window till they be dead. This woman was many ages ago got with child by the owner of this place, who murdered her in his garden, and flung her into the river under the window; but truly I thought not of it when I lodged you here, it being the best room in the house.' We made little reply to her speech, but disposed ourselves to be gone suddenly.

Note 11. — Knight's Pennon, p. 240

The pennon of a knight was, in shape, a long streamer, and forked like a swallow's tail; the banner of a bannered was square, and was formed into the other by cutting the ends from the pennon. It was thus the ceremony was performed on the pennon of John Chandos, by the Black Prince, before the battle of Najara.

Note 12. — Sensibility to Pain, p. 280

Such an expression is said to have been used by Mandrin, the celebrated smuggler, while in the act of being broken upon the wheel. This dreadful punishment consists in the executioner, with a bar of iron, breaking the shoulder-bones, arms, thigh-bones, and legs of the criminal, taking his alternate sides. The punishment is concluded by a blow across the breast, called the *coup de grace*, because it removes the sufferer from his agony. When Mandrin received the second blow over the left shoulder-bone, he laughed.

His confessor inquired the reason of demeanour so unbecoming his situation. 'I only laugh at my own folly, my father,' answered Mandrin, 'who could suppose that sensibility of pain should continue after the nervous system had been completely deranged by the first blow.'

Note 13. — Keiths of Craig, p. 327

The Keiths of Craig, in Kincardineshire, descended from John Keith, fourth son of William, second Earl Marischal, who got from his father, about 1480, the lands of Craig, and part of Garvock, in that county. In Douglas's *Baronage*, 443 to 445, is a pedigree of that family. Colonel Robert Keith of Craig (the seventh in descent from John), by his wife, Agnes, daughter of Robert Murray of Murrayshall, of the family of Blackbarony, widow of Colonel Stirling, of the family of Keir, had one son, viz. Robert Keith of Craig, ambassador to the court of Vienna, afterwards to St. Petersburgh — which latter situation he held at the accession of King George III. — who died at Edinburgh in 1774. He married Margaret, second daughter of Sir William Cunningham of Caprington, by Janet, only child and heiress of Sir James Dick of Prestonfield; and, among other children of this marriage, were the well-known diplomatist, Sir Robert Murray Keith, K.B., a general in the army, and for some time ambassador at Vienna; Sir Basil Keith, Knight, captain in the navy, who died governor of Jamaica; and my excellent friend, Anne Murray Keith, who ultimately came into possession of the family estates, and died not long before the date of the Introduction (1831).

Note 14. — Sanctuary of Holyrood, p. 330

The reader may be gratified with Hector Boece's narrative of the original foundation of the famous abbey of Holyrood, or the Holy Cross, as given in Bellenden's translation: —

Eftir deith of Alexander the First, his brothir David come out of Ingland, and wes crounit at Scone, the yeir of God MCXXIV yeiris, and did gret justice, eftir his coronation, in all partis of his realme. He had na weris during the time of King Hary; and wes sa pietuous, that he sat daylie in jugement, to caus his pure comonis to have justice; and causit the actionis of his noblis to be decidit be his othir jugis. He gart ilk juge redres the skaithis that come to the party be his wrang sentence; throw quhilk, he decorit his realm with mony nobil actis, and ejeckit the vennomus custome of riotus cheir, quhilk wes inducit afore be Inglismen, quhen thai com with Quene Margaret; for the samin wes noisum to al gud maneris, makand his pepil tender and effeminat.

In the fourt yeir of his regne, this nobill prince come to visie the madin Castell of Edinburgh. At this time, all the boundis of Scotland wer ful of woddis, lesouris, and medois; for the countre wes more gevin to store of bestiall than ony productioun of cornis; and about this castell was ane gret forest, full of haris, hindis, toddis, and siclike maner of beistis. Now was the Rude Day cumin, callit the exaltation of the croce; and, becaus the samin wes ane his solempne day, the king past to his contemplation. Eftir that the messis wer done with maist solempnite and reverence, comperit afore him mony young and insolent baronis of Scotland, richt desirus to haif sum plesair and solace, be chace of hundis in the said forest. At this time wes with the king ane man of singulare and devoit life, namit Alkwine, channon eftir the ordour of Sanct Augustine, quhilk wes lang time confessoure, afore, to King David in Ingland, the time that he wes Erle of Huntingtoun and Northumbirland. This religious man dissuadit the king, be mony reasonis, to pas to this huntis; and allegit the day wes so solempne, be reverence of the haly croce, that he suld gif him erar, for that day, to contemplation than ony othir exercition. Nochtheles, his dissuasionis litill avalit; for the king wes finalie so provokit, be inoportune solicitatioun of his baronis, that he past, nochtwithstanding the solempnite of this day, to his hountis. At last, quhen he wes cumin throw the vail that lyis to the gret eist fra the said castell, quhare now lyis the Cannongait, the staill past throw the wod with sic noyis and din of rachis and bugillis, that all the bestis were rasit fra thair dennis. Now wes the king cumin to the fute of the crag, and all his noblis severit, heir and thair, fra him at thair game and solace; quhen suddanlie apperit to his sicht the farist hart that evir wes sene afore

with levand creatour. The noyis and din of this hart rinnand, as apperit, with anful and braid tindis, maid the kingis hors so effrayit, that na renyeis micht hald him; bot ran, perforce, ouir mire and mossis, away with the king. Nochtheles, the hart followit so fast, that he dang baith the king and his hors to the ground. Than the king kest abak his handis betuix the tindis of this hart, to hald savit him fra the strak thairof; and the haly croce slaid, incontinent, in his handis. The hart fled away with gret violence, and evanist in the same place quhare now springis the Rude Well. The pepyll, richt affrayitly, returnit to him out of all partis of the wod, to comfort him efter his trubill, and fell on kneis, devotly adoring the haly croce; for it was not cumin bot sum hevinly providence, as weill apperis, for thair is na man can schaw of quhat mater it is of, metal or tre. Sone eftir, the king returnit to his castel; and in the nicht following, he was admonist, be ane vision in his sleip, to big ane abbay of channonis regular in the same place quhare he gat the croce. Als sone as he was awalkinnit, he schew his vision to Alkwine, his confessour; and he na thing suspendit his gud mind, bot erar inflammit him with maist fervent devotion thairto. The king, incontinent, send his traist servandis in France and Flanderis, and brocht richt crafty masonis to big this abbay; syne dedicat it in the honour of this haly croce. The croce remanit continewally in the said abbay, to the time of King David Bruce; quhilk was unhappely tane with it at Durame, quhare it is haldin yit in gret veneration. — Boece, Book XII. ch. xvi.

It is by no means clear what Scottish prince first built a palace, properly so called, in the precincts of this renowned seat of sanctity. The abbey, endowed by successive sovereigns and many powerful nobles with munificent gifts of lands and tithes, came, in process of time, to be one of the most important of the ecclesiastical corporations of Scotland; and as early as the days of Robert Bruce parliaments were held occasionally within its buildings. We have evidence that James IV. had a royal lodging adjoining to the cloister; but it is generally agreed that the first considerable edifice for the accommodation of the royal family erected here was that of James V., *anno* 1525, great part of which still remains, and forms the north-western side of the existing palace. The more modern buildings which complete the quadrangle were erected by King Charles II. The name of the old conventual church was used as the parish church of the Canongate from the period of the Reformation, until James II. claimed it for his chapel royal, and had it fitted up accordingly in a style of splendour which grievously outraged the feelings of his Presbyterian subjects. The roof of this fragment of a once magnificent church fell in in the year 1768, and it has remained ever since in a state of desolation. For fuller particulars, see the *Provincial Antiquities of Scotland* [by Sir W. Scott, *Miscellaneous Prose Works*, 1834, vol. vii.], or the *History of Holyrood-house* [1829], by Mr. Charles Mackie.

The greater part of this ancient palace is now again occupied by his Majesty Charles the Tenth of France, and the that illustrious family, which, in former ages so closely connected age and alliance with the house of Stuart, seems to have been destined to run a similar career of misfortune. *Requiescant in pace!*

Note 15. — Bannatyne Club, p. 342

This club, of which the Author of *Waverley* has the honour to be president, was instituted in February 1823, for the purpose of printing and publishing works illustrative of the history, literature, and antiquities of Scotland. It continues to prosper, and has already rescued from oblivion many curious materials of Scottish history. — The club was dissolved in 1861. See the volume of *Adversaria* presented in 1867 to the members by Mr. Laing, the secretary (*Laing*).

Note 16. — Sommerville Family, p. 342

The ancient Norman family of the Sommervilles came into this island with William the Conqueror, and established one branch in Gloucestershire,

another in Scotland. After the lapse of seven hundred years, the remaining possessions of these two branches were united in the person of the late Lord Sommerville, on the death of his English kinsman, the well-known author of *The Chase*.

Note 17. — Lines from Horace, p. 353

Horace, *Sat.*, bk. ii. 2. The meaning will be best conveyed to the English reader in Pope's imitation: —

> What's property, dear Swift? you see it alter
> From you to me, from me to Peter Walter,
> Or in a mortgage prove a lawyer's snare,
> Or in a jointure vanish from the heir.
> . . . . . .
> Shades, that to Bacon could retreat afford,
> Become the portion of a booby lord;
> And Helmsley, once proud Buckingham's delight,
> Slides to a scrivener or to city knight.
> Let lands and houses have what lords they will.
> Let us be fix'd, and our masters still.

Note 18. — Steele, the Covenanter, p. 356

The following extract from Swift's *Life of Creichton* gives the particulars of the bloody scene alluded to in the text: —

Having drank hard one night, I [Creichton] dreamed that I had found Captain David Steele, a notorious rebel, in one of the five farmers' houses on a mountain in the shire of Clydesdale, and parish of Lismahago, within eight miles of Hamilton, a place that I was well acquainted with. This man was head of the rebels since the affair of Airs Moss, having succeeded to Hackston, who had been there taken, and afterward hanged, as the reader has already heard; for, as to Robert Hamilton, who was their commander-in-chief at Bothwell Bridge, he appeared no more among them, but fled, as it was believed, to Holland.

Steele, and his father before him, held a farm in the estate of Hamilton, within two or three miles of that town. When he betook himself to arms, the farm lay waste, and the Duke could find no other person who would venture to take it; whereupon his Grace sent several messages to Steele, to know the reason why he kept the farm waste. The Duke received no other answer than that he would keep it waste, in spite of him and the king too; whereupon his Grace, at whose table I had always the honour to be a welcome guest, desired I would use my endeavours to destroy that rogue, and I would oblige him for ever.

. . . . . .

To return to my story. When I awaked out of my dream, as I had done before in the affair of Wilson (and I desire the same apology I made in the introduction to these *Memoirs* may serve for both), I presently rose, and ordered thirty-six dragoons to be at the place appointed by break of day. When we arrived thither, I sent a party to each of the five farmers' houses. This villain Steele had murdered above forty of the king's subjects in cold blood, and, as I was informed, had often laid snares to entrap me; but it happened that, although he usually kept a gang to attend him, yet at this time he had none, when he stood in the greatest need. One of the party found him in one of the farmers' houses, just as I happened to dream. The dragoons first searched all the rooms below without success, till two of them, hearing somebody stirring over their heads, went up a pair of turnpike stairs. Steele had put on his clothes while the search was making below; the chamber where he lay was called the Chamber of Deese,[1] which is the name given to a room where the laird lies, when he comes to a tenant's house. Steele, suddenly opening the door, fired a blunderbuss down at the two dragoons as they were coming up the stairs; but the bullets grazing against the side of the turnpike, only wounded, and did not kill, them. Then Steele violently threw himself down the stairs among them, and made toward the door to save his life, but

[1] Or chamber of state; so called from the *dais*, or canopy and elevation of floor, which distinguished the part of old halls which was occupied by those of high rank. Hence the phrase was obliquely used to signify state in general.

lost it upon the spot; for the dragoons who guarded the house dispatched him with their broadswords.[1] I was not with the party when he was killed, being at that time employed in searching at one of the other four houses, but I soon found what had happened, by hearing the noise of the shot made with the blunderbuss; from whence I returned straight to Lanark, and immediately sent one of the dragoons express to General Drummond at Edinburgh. — *Swift's Works*, vol. xii. (*Memoirs of Captain John Creichton*), pages 57–59, edit. Edinb. 1824.

Note 10. — Iron Rasp, p. 381

The ingenious Mr. R. Chambers's *Traditions of Edinburgh* give the following account of the forgotten rasp or risp: —

This house had a pin or risp at the door, instead of the more modern convenience, a knocker. The pin canonised [rendered interesting by the figure which it makes] in Scottish song was formed of a small rod of iron, twisted or otherwise notched, which was placed perpendicularly, starting out a little from the door, bearing a small ring of the same metal, which an applicant for admittance drew rapidly up and down the nicks, so as to produce a grating sound. Sometimes the rod was simply stretched across the *vizzying* hole, a convenient aperture through which the porter could take cognisance of the person applying; in which case it acted also as a stanchion. These were almost all disused about sixty years ago, when knockers were generally substituted as more genteel. But knockers at that time did not long remain in repute, though they have never been altogether superseded, even by bells, in the Old Town. The comparative merit of knockers and pins was for a long time a subject of doubt, and many knockers got their heads twisted off in the course of the dispute [vol. i. pp. 234, 235, ed. 1825].

Note 20. — Salisbury Crags, p. 382

The Rev. Mr. Bowles derives the name of these crags, as of the episcopal city in the west of England, from the same root; both, in his opinion, which he very ably defends and illustrates, having been the sites of druidical temples.

Note 21. — Black Watch, p. 382

The well-known original designation of the gallant 42d Regiment. Being the first corps raised for the royal service in the Highlands, and allowed to retain their national garb, they were thus named from the contrast which their dark tartans furnished to the scarlet and white of the other regiments.

Note 22. — Countess of Eglinton, p. 387

Susannah Kennedy, daughter of Sir Archibald Kennedy of Culzean, Bart., by Elizabeth Lesly, daughter of David Lord Newark, third wife of Alexander ninth Earl of Eglinton, and mother of the tenth and eleventh earls. She survived her husband, who died 1729, no less than fifty-seven [one] years, and died March 1780, in her ninety-first year. Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*, published 1726, is dedicated to her, in verse, by Hamilton of Bangour.

The following account of this distinguished lady is taken from Boswell's *Life of Johnson* by Mr. Croker: —

Lady Margaret Dalrymple, only daughter of John Earl of Stair, married in 1700, to Hugh, third Earl of Loudoun. She died in 1777, aged [nearly] one hundred. Of this

[1] Wodrow gives a different account of this exploit. 'In December this year (1686), David Steil, in the parish of Lismahagow, was surprised in the fields by Lieutenant Creichton, and after his surrender of himself on quarters, he was in a very little time most barbarously shot, and lies buried in the churchyard there.'

venerable lady, and of the Countess of Eglintoune, whom Johnson visited next day, he thus speaks in his *Journey*: — 'Length of life is distributed impartially to very different modes of life, in very different climates; and the mountains have no greater examples of age and health than the Lowlands, where I was introduced to two ladies of high quality, one of whom (Lady Loudoun), in her ninety-fourth year, presided at her table with the full exercise of all her powers, and the other (Lady Eglintoun) had attained her eighty-fourth year, without any diminution of her vivacity, and little reason to accuse time of depredations on her beauty. . . .

'Lady Eglintoune, though she was now in her eighty-fifth year, and had lived in the retirement of the country for almost half a century, was still a very agreeable woman. She was of the noble house of Kennedy, and had all the elevation which the consciousness of such birth inspires. Her figure was majestic, her manners high-bred, her reading extensive, and her conversation elegant. She had been the admiration of the . . y circles of life, and the patroness of poets. Dr. Johnson was delighted with his reception here. Her principles in church and state were congenial with his. She knew all his merit, and had heard much of him from her son, Earl Alexander, who loved to cultivate the acquaintance of men of talents in every department. . . .

'In the course of our conversation this day it came out that Lady Eglintoune was married the year before Dr. Johnson was born; upon which she graciously said to him that she might have been his mother, and that she now adopted him; and when we were going away, she embraced him, saying, "My dear son, farewell!" My friend was much pleased with this day's entertainment, and owned that I had done well to force him out. . . .

'At Sir Alexander Dick's, from that absence of mind to which every man is at times subject, I told, in a blundering manner, Lady Eglintoune's complimentary adoption of Dr. Johnson as her son; for I unfortunately stated that her ladyship adopted him as her son, in consequence of her having been married the year *after* he was born. Dr. Johnson instantly corrected me. "Sir, don't you perceive that you are defaming the Countess? For, supposing me to be her son, and that she was not married till the year after my birth, I must have been her *natural* son." A young lady of quality who was present very handsomely said, "Might not the son have justified the fault?" My friend was much flattered by this compliment, which he never forgot. When in more than ordinary spirits, and talking of his journey in Scotland, he has called to me, "Boswell, what was it that the young lady of quality said of me at Sir Alexander Dick's?" Nobody will doubt that I was happy in repeating it.'

Note 23. — Earl of Winton, p. 390

The incident her· alluded to is thus narrated in Nichols's *Progresses of James I.*, vol. iii. p. 406.

The family (of Winton) owed its first elevation to the union of Sir Christopher Seton with a sister of King Robert Bruce. With King James VI. they acquired great favour, who, having created his brother Earl of Dunfermline in 1599, made Robert, seventh Lord Seton, Earl of Winton in 1600. Before the King's accession to the English throne, his Majesty and the Queen were frequently at Seton, where the Earl ever ... a very hospitable table, at which all foreigners of quality were entertained on ... visits to Scotland. His lordship died in 1603, and was buried on the 5th of April, on the very day the King left Edinburgh for England. His Majesty, we are told, was pleased to rest himself at the south-west round of the orchard of Seton, on the highway, till the funeral was over, that he might not withdraw the noble company; and he said that he had lost a good, faithful, and loyal subject.

Note 24. — MacGregor of Glenstrae, p. 391

The 2 of Octr: (1603) Allaster MacGregor of Glanstrae tane be the laird Arkynles, bot escapit againe; bot after taken be the Earle of Argyll the 4 of Januarii, and brocht to Edr: the ... Januar: 1604, wt: 18 mae of hes friendes MacGregors. He wes convoyit to Berwick be the gaird, conform to the Earle's promes; for he promesit to put him out of Scottis grund. Sua he keipit ane Hielandman's promes, in respect he sent the gaird to convoy him out of Scottis grund; bot yai wer not directit to pairt wt: him, bot to fetche him bak againe. The 18 of Januar, he came at evin againe to Edinburghe; and upone the 20 day, he wes hangit at the crosse, and ij

of his freindes and name, upone ane gallows: himself being chieff, he wes hangit his awin hight above the rest of hes freindis. — Birrell's *Diary*, in Dalzell's *Fragments of Scottish History*, pp. 60, 61.

Note 25. — Highland Bridges, p. 399

This is, or was at least, a necessary accomplishment. In one of the most beautiful districts of the Highlands was, not many years since, a bridge bearing this startling caution, 'Keep to the right side, the left being dangerous.'

Note 26. — Loch Awe, p. 400

Loch Awe, upon the banks of which the scene of action took place, is thirty-four miles in length. The north side is bounded by wide muirs and inconsiderable hills, which occupy an extent of country from twelve to twenty miles in breadth, and the whole of this space is enclosed as by a circumvallation. Upon the north it is barred by Loch Eitive, on the south by Loch Awe, and on the east by the deep and dreadful pass of Brandir, through which an arm of the latter lake opens, at about four miles from its eastern extremity, and discharges the river Awe into the former. The pass is about three miles in length; its east side is bounded by the almost inaccessible steeps which form the base of the vast and rugged mountain of Cruachan. The crags rise in some places almost perpendicularly from the water, and for their chief extent show no space nor level at their feet, but a rough and narrow edge of stony beach. Upon the whole of these cliffs grew a thick and interwoven wood of all kinds of trees, both timber, dwarf, and coppice; no track existed through the wilderness, but a winding path, which sometimes crept along the precipitous height, and sometimes descended in a straight pass along the margin of the water. Near the extremity of the defile, a narrow level opened between the water and the crag; but a great part of this, as well as the preceding steeps, was formerly enveloped in a thicket, which showed little facility to the feet of any but the martins and wild-cats. Along the west side of the pass lies a wall of sheer and barren crags. From behind they rise in rough, uneven, and heathy declivities, out of the wide muir before mentioned, between Loch Eitive and Loch Awe, but in front they terminate abruptly in the most frightful precipices, which form the whole side of the pass, and descend at one fall into the water which fills its trough. At the north end of this barrier, and at the termination of the pass, lies that part of the cliff which is called Craiganuni; at its foot the arm of the lake gradually contracts its water to a very narrow space, and at length terminates at two rocks called the Rocks of Brandir, which form a strait channel, something resembling the lock of a canal. From this outlet there is a continual descent towards Loch Eitive, and from hence the river Awe pours out its current in a furious stream, foaming over a bed broken with holes, and cumbered with masses of granite and whinstone.

If ever there was a bridge near Craiganuni in ancient times, it must have been at the Rocks of Brandir. From the days of Wallace to those of General Wade, there were never passages of this kind but in places of great necessity, too narrow for a boat and too wide for a leap; even then they were but an unsafe footway formed of the trunks of trees placed transversely from rock to rock, unstripped of their bark, and destitute of either plank or rail. For such a structure, there is no place in the neighbourhood of Craiganuni but at the rocks above mentioned. In the lake and on the river, the water is far too wide; but at the strait, the space is not greater than might be crossed by a tall mountain pine, and the rocks on either side are formed by nature like a pier. That this point was always a place of passage is rendered probable by its facility, and the use of recent times. It is not long since it was the common gate of the country on either side of the river and the pass: the mode of crossing is yet in the memory of people living, and was performed by a little currach moored on either side the water, and a stout cable fixed across the stream from bank to bank, by which the passengers drew themselves across in the manner still practised in places of the same nature. It is no argument against the existence of a bridge in former times, that the above method only existed in ours, rather than a passage of that kind which would seem the more improved expedient. The contradiction is sufficiently accounted for by the decay of timber in the neighbourhood. Of old, both oaks and firs of an immense size abounded within a very inconsiderable distance; but it is now many years since the destruction of the forests of Glen Eitive and Glen Urcha has deprived the country of all the trees

of sufficient size to cross the strait of Brandir; and it is probable that the currach was not introduced till the want of timber had disenabled the inhabitants of the country from maintaining a bridge. It only further remains to be noticed that, at some distance below the Rocks of Brandir, there was formerly a ford, which was used for cattle in the memory of people yet living; from the narrowness of the passages the force of the stream, and the broken bed of the river, it was, however, a dangerous pass, and could only be attempted with safety at leisure and by experience. Notes to *The Bridal of Caolchairn* [pp. 277–279, by John Hay Allan].

Note 27. — Battle betwixt Bruce and Macdougal of Lorn, p. 401

But the King, whose dear-bought experience in war had taught him extreme caution, remained in the Braes of Balquhidder till he had acquired by his spies and outskirrers a perfect knowledge of the disposition of the army of Lorn, and the intention of its leader. He then divided his force into two columns, entrusting the command of the first, in which he placed his archers and lightest armed troops, to Sir James Douglas, whilst he himself took the leading of the other, which consisted principally of his knights and barons. On approaching the defile, Bruce despatched Sir James Douglas by a pathway which the enemy had neglected to occupy, with directions to advance silently, and gain the heights above and in front of the hilly ground where the men of Lorn were concealed; and, having ascertained that this movement had been executed with success, he put himself at the head of his own division, and fearlessly led his men into the defile. Here, prepared as he was for what was to take place, it was difficult to prevent a temporary panic, when the yell, which, to this day, invariably precedes the assault of the mountaineer, burst from the rugged bosom of Ben Cruachan; and the woods which, the moment before, had waved in silence and solitude, gave forth their birth of steel-clad warriors, and, in an instant, became instinct with the dreadful vitality of war. But, although appalled and checked for a brief space by the suddenness of the assault, and the masses of rock which the enemy rolled down from the precipices, Bruce, at the head of his division, pressed up the side of the mountain. Whilst this party assaulted the men of Lorn with the utmost fury, Sir James Douglas and his party shouted suddenly upon the heights in their front, showering down their arrows upon them, and, when these missiles were exhausted, attacking them with their swords and battle-axes. The consequence of such an attack, both in front and rear, was the total discomfiture of the army of Lorn; and the circumstances to which this chief had so confidently looked forward, as rendering the destruction of Bruce almost inevitable, were now turned with fatal effect against himself. His great superiority of numbers cumbered and impeded his movements. Thrust, by the double assault, and by the peculiar nature of the ground, into such narrow room as the pass afforded, and driven to fury by finding themselves cut to pieces in detail, without the power of resistance, the men of Lorn fled towards Loch Eitive, where a bridge thrown over the Awe, and supported upon two immense rocks, known by the name of the Rocks of Brandir, formed the solitary communication between the side of the river where the battle took place and the country of Lorn. Their object was to gain the bridge, which was composed entirely of wood, and, having availed themselves of it in their retreat, to destroy it, and thus throw the impassable torrent of the Awe between them and their enemies. But their intention was instantly detected by Douglas, who, rushing down from the high grounds at the head of his archers and light-armed foresters, attacked the body of the mountaineers, which had occupied the bridge, and drove them from it with great slaughter, so that Bruce and his division, on coming up, passed it without molestation; and, this last resource being taken from them, the army of Lorn were, in a few hours, literally cut to pieces, whilst their chief, who occupied Loch Eitive with his fleet, saw, from his ships, the discomfiture of his men, and found it impossible to give them the least assistance. — [Patrick Fraser] Tytler's 'Life of Bruce' [in *Scottish Worthies* (1831-33), vol. i. 413-415].

Note 28. — Massacre of Glencoe, p. 423

The following succinct account of this too celebrated event may be sufficient for this place: —

In the beginning of the year 1692, an action of unexampled barbarity disgraced the government of King William III. in Scotland. In the August preceding, a proclamation had been issued, offering an indemnity to such insurgents as should take the oaths to the king and queen, on or before the last day of December; and the chiefs of such

tribes as had been in arms for James soon after took advantage of the proclamation. But Macdonald of Glencoe was prevented by accident, rather than design, from tendering his submission within the limited time. In the end of December he went to Colonel Hill, who commanded the garrison in Fort William, to take the oaths of allegiance to the government; and the latter having furnished him with a letter to Sir Colin Campbell, sheriff of the County of Argyll, directed him to repair immediately to Inverary, to make his submission in a legal manner before that magistrate. But the way to Inverary lay through almost impassable mountains, the season was extremely rigorous, and the whole country was covered with a deep snow. So eager, however, was Macdonald to take the oaths before the limited time should expire, that, though the road lay within half a mile of his own house, he stopped not to visit his family, and, after various obstructions, arrived at Inverary. The time had elapsed, and the sheriff hesitated to receive his submission; but Macdonald prevailed by his importunities, and even tears, in inducing that functionary to administer to him the oath of allegiance, and to certify the cause of his delay. At this time Sir John Dalrymple, afterwards Earl of Stair, being in attendance upon William as Secretary of State for Scotland, took advantage of Macdonald's neglecting to take the oaths within the time prescribed, and procured from the king a warrant of military execution against that chief and his whole clan. This was done at the instigation of the Earl of Breadalbane, whose lands the Glencoe men had plundered, and whose treachery to government in negotiating with the Highland clans Macdonald himself had exposed. The king was accordingly persuaded that Glencoe was the main obstacle to the pacification of the Highlands; and the fact of the unfortunate chief's submission having been concealed, the sanguinary orders for proceeding to military execution against his clan were in consequence obtained. The warrant was both signed and countersigned by the king's own hand, and the Secretary urged the officers who commanded in the Highlands to execute their orders with the utmost rigour. Campbell of Glenlyon, a captain in Argyll's regiment, and two subalterns, were ordered to repair to Glencoe on the first of February with a hundred and twenty men. Campbell, being uncle to young Macdonald's wife, was received by the father with all manner of friendship and hospitality. The men were lodged at free quarters in the houses of his tenants, and received the kindest entertainment. Till the 13th of the month the troops lived in the utmost harmony and familiarity with the people; and on the very night of the massacre the officers passed the evening at cards in Macdonald's house. In the night Lieutenant Lindsay, with a party of soldiers, called in a friendly manner at his door, and was instantly admitted. Macdonald, while in the act of rising to receive his guest, was shot dead through the back with two bullets. His wife had already dressed; but she was stripped naked by the soldiers, who tore the rings off her fingers with their teeth. The slaughter now became general, and neither age nor infirmity was spared. Some women, in defending their children, were killed; boys, imploring mercy, were shot dead by officers on whose knees they hung. In one place nine persons, as they sat enjoying themselves at table, were butchered by the soldiers. In Inverriggon, Campbell's own quarters, nine men were first bound by the soldiers, and then shot at intervals, one by one. Nearly forty persons were massacred by the troops; and several who fled to the mountains perished by famine and the inclemency of the season. Those who escaped owed their lives to a tempestuous night. Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, who had received the charge of the execution from Dalrymple, was on his march with four hundred men, to guard all the passes from the valley of Glencoe; but he was obliged to stop by the severity of the weather, which proved the safety of the unfortunate clan. Next day he entered the valley, laid the houses in ashes, and carried away the cattle and spoil, which were divided among the officers and soldiers. – *Article*, 'Britain,' *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Eighth Edition.

Note 29. — Fidelity of the Highlanders, p. 433

Of the strong, undeviating attachment of the Highlanders to the person, and their deference to the will or commands, of their chiefs and superiors, their rigid adherence to duty and principle, and their chivalrous acts of self-devotion to these in the face of danger and death, there are many instances recorded in General Stewart of Garth's interesting *Sketches of the Highlanders and Highland Regiments*, which might not inaptly supply parallels to the deeds of the Romans themselves, at the era when Rome was in her glory. The following instances of such are worthy of being here quoted: —

In the year 1795, a serious disturbance broke out in Glasgow among the Breadalbane Fencibles. Several men having been confined and threatened with corporal punish-

ment, considerable discontent and irritation were excited among their comrades, which increased to such violence, that, when some men were confined in the guard-house, a great proportion of the regiment rushed out and forcibly released the prisoners. This violation of military discipline was not to be passed over, and accordingly measures were immediately taken to secure the ringleaders. But so many were equally concerned, that it was difficult, if not impossible, to fix the crime on any, as being more prominently guilty. And here was shown a trait of character worthy of a better cause, and which originated from a feeling alive to the disgrace of a degrading punishment. The soldiers being made sensible of the nature of their misconduct, and the consequent necessity of public example, *several men voluntarily offered themselves to stand trial*, and suffer the sentence of the law as an atonement for the whole. These men were accordingly marched to Edinburgh Castle, tried, and four condemned to be shot. Three of them were afterwards reprieved, and the fourth, Alexander Sutherland, was shot on Musselburgh Sands.

The following semi-official account of this unfortunate misunderstanding was published at the time: —

'During the afternoon of Monday, when a private of the light company of the Breadalbane Fencibles, who had been confined for a military offence, was released by that company, and some other companies who had assembled in a tumultuous manner before the guard-house, no person whatever was hurt, and no violence offered; and however unjustifiable the proceedings, it originated not from any disrespect or ill-will to their officers, but from a mistaken point of honour, in a particular set of men in the battalion, who thought themselves disgraced by the impending punishment of one of their number. The men have, in every respect, since that period conducted themselves with the greatest regularity and strict subordination. The whole of the battalion seemed extremely sensible of the improper conduct of such as were concerned, whatever regret they might feel for the fate of the few individuals who had so readily given themselves up as prisoners, to be tried for their own and others' misconduct.'

On the march to Edinburgh, a circumstance occurred, the more worthy of notice, as it shows a strong principle of honour and fidelity to his word and to his officer in a common Highland soldier. One of the men stated to the officer commanding the party, that he knew what his fate would be, but that he had left business of the utmost importance to a friend in Glasgow, which he wished to transact before his death; that, as to himself, he was fully prepared to meet his fate; but with regard to his friend, he could not die in peace unless the business was settled; and that, if the officer would suffer him to return to Glasgow, a few hours there would be sufficient, and he would join him before he reached Edinburgh, and march as a prisoner with the party. The soldier added, 'You have known me since I was a child; you know my country and kindred, and you may believe I shall never bring you to any blame by a breach of the promise I now make, to be with you in full time to be delivered up in the Castle.' This was a startling proposal to the officer, who was a judicious, humane man, and knew perfectly his risk and responsibility in yielding to such an extraordinary application. However, his confidence was such, that he complied with the request of the prisoner, who returned to Glasgow at night, settled his business, and left the town before daylight to redeem his pledge. He took a long circuit to avoid being seen, apprehended as a deserter, and sent back to Glasgow, as probably his account of his officer's indulgence would not have been credited. In consequence of this caution, and the lengthened march through woods and over hills by an unfrequented route, there was no appearance of him at the hour appointed. The perplexity of the officer when he reached the neighbourhood of Edinburgh may be easily imagined. He moved forward slowly indeed, but no soldier appeared; and unable to delay any longer, he marched up to the Castle, and as he was delivering over the prisoners, but before any report was given in, Macmartin, the absent soldier, rushed in among his fellow-prisoners, all pale with anxiety and fatigue, and breathless with apprehension of the consequences in which his delay might have involved his benefactor.

In whatever light the conduct of the officer (my respectable friend, Major Colin Campbell) may be considered, either by military men or others, in this memorable exemplification of the characteristic principle of his countrymen, fidelity to their word, it cannot but be wished that the soldier's magnanimous self-devotion had been taken as an atonement for his own misconduct and that of the whole, who also had made a high sacrifice, in the voluntary offer of their lives for the conduct of their brother soldiers. Are these a people to be treated as malefactors, without regard to their feelings and principles; and might not a discipline somewhat different from the usual mode be, with advantage, applied to them? — Vol. II. pp. 413–415, 3d edit.

A soldier of this regiment (the Argyllshire Highlanders) deserted, and emigrated to America, where he settled. Several years after his desertion, a letter was received from him, with a sum of money, for the purpose of procuring one or two men to supply his place in the regiment, as the only recompense he could make for 'breaking his oath

to his God and his allegiance to his king, which preyed on his conscience in such a manner, that he had no rest night nor day.

This man had had good principles early instilled into his mind, and the disgrace which he had been originally taught to believe would attach to a breach of faith now operated with full effect. The soldier who deserted from the 42d Regiment at Gibraltar, in 1797, exhibited the same remorse of conscience after he had violated his allegiance. In countries where such principles prevail, and regulate the character of a people, the mass of the population may, on occasions of trial, be reckoned on as sound and trustworthy. — Vol. II. p. 218.

The late James Menzies of Culdares, having engaged in the rebellion of 1715, and been taken at Preston, in Lancashire, was carried to London, where he was tried and condemned, but afterwards reprieved. Grateful for this clemency, he remained at home in 1745, but, retaining a predilection for the old cause, he sent a handsome charger as a present to Prince Charles, when advancing through England. The servant who led and delivered the horse was taken prisoner, and carried to Carlisle, where he was tried and condemned. To extort a discovery of the person who sent the horse, threats of immediate execution in case of refusal, and offers of pardon on his giving information, were held out ineffectually to the faithful messenger. He knew, he said, what the consequence of a disclosure would be to his master, and his own life was not being in the comparison. When brought out for execution, he was again pressed to inform on his master. He asked if they were serious in supposing him such a villain. If he did what they desired, and forgot his master and his trust, he could not return to his native country, for Glenlyon would be no home or country for him, as he would be despised and hunted out of the glen. Accordingly he kept steady to his trust, and was executed. This trusty servant's name was John Macnaughton, from Glenlyon, in Perthshire; he deserves to be mentioned, both on account of his incorruptible fidelity, and of his testimony to the honourable principles of the people, and to their detestation of a breach of trust to a kind and honourable master, however great might be the risk, or however fatal the consequences, to the individual himself. — Vol. I. pp. 52, 53.

GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

ABOON, above

ABSOLUTE, SIR ANTHONY, a character in Sheridan's *Rivals* (1775)

AD GRÆCAS KALENDAS, to the Greek Calends (an indefinite period)

ALLAN, SIR WILLIAM, Scottish painter (1782-1850), and a personal friend of Sir Walter Scott

ALMANZOR, a character in Dryden's tragedy, *The Conquest of Granada* (1670)

AMATUS AND AMATA, lover, male and female

AMOURETTES, love affairs, intrigues

'AND WHARE DREW YE I GAED?' (p. 366), from C. Macklin's *Man of the World* (1781), a satire on the Scots

ANEURIN, a Welsh bard, celebrated the battle of Cattraeth (*q. v.*) in a poem entitled *Gododin*

ANGELICA, ribs of the leaves of dwarf gentian, candied or preserved

APPIAN (highway), connected Rome with the chief towns in the south of Italy, was made in part by Appius Claudius Cæcus in 313 B. C.

ARBLAST, cross-bow

ARGYLE'S RISING, in support of the Duke of Monmouth, against James II. of England, in 1685

ARLECHINO, OF ARLECCHINO, harlequin. The harlequin of the old Italian stage was a clown, or jest-maker and prank-player

ARMORICAN, a native of Brittany or Normandy

ASSOILZIE, to absolve, acquit of sin

AUGHT, possession, property

AULD REEKIE, Old Smoky, a popular name for Edinburgh

AVE REGINA COELI, hail, Queen of Heaven!

AWEN, flow of poetic inspiration

AWMOUS, alms

BACKSPEIR, to cross-question, trace back a story, statement

BAILEY, the space between the outer and inner walls of a castle

BAILLIE, JOANNA, author of a series of *Plays on the Passions* (1798-1836)

BANQUETTE, a stone bench running along the inside of the rampart.

BASTILLE, a fortress prison

BAULD, bold

BAYLE'S, OF BAYLL'S, a tavern in Shakespeare Square (now disappeared) near the present General Post Office, Edinburgh

BEAST WHO LAUGHS (p. 264), the striped hyæna

BELL-THE-CAT, to undertake a dangerous work. In the reign of James III. of Scotland, Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, 'belled-the-cat' by putting to death the king's unworthy favourite Cochrane. *See* Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, chap. xxii.

BENEDICITE, bless you!

BEARFORD, or BEARFORD, PARK, now George Street, Edinburgh

BESTIALL, cattle

BEVERAGE, MORE ELEGANT AND COSTLY (p. 3), wine

BEZANT OR BYZANT, a gold coin = 10s. to 20s., widely current in the Middle Ages

BIDE, to endure, bear; to stay, remain

BIEN, frugal, comfortable

BIG, to build; BIGGIT, built; BIGGING, a building

BIRLING, a boat with six or eight oars, used on the west coast of Scotland

BITTOCK, a short distance, but proverbially an extra long distance

BLINK, a moment, brief space of time

BOBADIL, CAPTAIN, a character in Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* (1598)

BODACH, a spirit, spectre

BODDLE, a Scotch copper coin = ⅓th penny English

BOUSEMAN, one who makes a bode, bid, offer to buy

BOGLE, spectre

BONASSUS (p. 372). *Compare* the French word *bonasse*, an extremely simple, almost childish, person

BONBONNIÈRE, sweetmeat-box

BON GRÉ, MAL GRÉ, willy nilly, whether one is willing or not

BORREL, rustic, rude

BOWLES, REV. MR. (William Lisle Bowles), poet and antiquary, author of the

antiquarian work, *Hermes Britannicus* (1828)

Beach, a dog that hunts by scent

Bereagan, that which is variegated, *i. e.* the tartan

Brownie, a gnome or dwarf of supernatural character

Brown's Square, in Edinburgh. *See Redgauntlet*, Note 10, p. 43

Cader-Idris, meaning the 'chair of Idris,' a mountain about 3000 feet high in North Wales

Caerleon, or **Caerleon**, on the Usk in Monmouthshire, closely associated with the history of King Arthur

Cancheling, to turn suddenly on the wing before striking

Canny, safe, lucky

Carcanet, a jewelled necklace

Carline, an old woman

Carritch, the catechism

Carthusian silence. The monks of the Carthusian order were bound to preserve almost unbroken silence

Cateran, a Highland robber

Cattraeth, a battle fought in 603 A. D. between the Britons of Strathclyde (south-west of Scotland) and the Saxons, celebrated by Aneurin (*q. v.*)

Chandos, John, a distinguished soldier and follower of Edward the Black Prince, died in 1370

Chappe, a large military cloak

Chappit, struck

Chasse-café, more correctly, **pousse-café**, a small glass of brandy or liqueur taken after coffee

Cheir (riotous), cheer, entertainment

Chère exquise, exquisite cheer, fare

Cheild, fellow

Cistercians, a branch or offshoot from the Benedictines; they aimed at a stricter observance of their common rules than the mother order

Clachan, hamlet

Clack, the clapper of a mill; **clack-mill**, a windmill rattle for frightening birds

Clarendon, Lord, Edward Hyde, author of *History of the Rebellion in England* (1704-7)

Cloudberry, is not scarlet (p. 417), but of a pale orange colour, and in appearance resembles a large raspberry

Cnicht, a servant, follower

Cockade, white. *See* White cockade

Cockburn, Mr., afterwards Lord Cockburn (1779-1854), took a warm interest in preserving the natural beauties of Edinburgh

Coistrel, an inferior groom, base varlet, knave

Colunie, or **Colunwy, Castle of**, Colwyn Castle in Radnorshire, has now almost entirely disappeared

Comperit, summoned to attend court

Comus, the god of revelry, in ancient Greek mythology

Confessor, royal and holy, King Edward the Confessor

Conjuro vos, etc. (p. 69), I conjure you, spirits of evil, great and small

Corehouse Linn, a waterfall in the Clyde, about 2 miles above Lanark

Cornage, the obligation to blow a horn (*cornu*) on the approach of an enemy

Cornhill, on the Tweed, 2 miles from Coldstream

Coronach, the Highland lament for the dead

Corps de garde, the guards

Corso, a wide, straight street in Italian towns

Cottar, a peasant or cottager living on a farm

Coucher, a levee or audience held just before retiring to sleep

Counter, hunt. *See* Hunt counter

Crack, gossip

Crags, presumably Salisbury Crags, a part of the mountainous mass of Arthur's Seat, overlooking the Canongate. *See* Note 20, p. 478

Cramer, a small merchant, chapman

Creagh, a cattle-lifting raid, foray

Cretan warrior, probably Minos the Younger, king of Crete, who demanded the human tribute from Athens for the Minotaur

Croce, cross

Crogan, a somewhat contumelious epithet applied by the Welsh to the English

Cruse a cup, drink a cup of wine, perhaps from the practice of crushing grapes into a cup in wine countries. *Comp.* the phrase 'crack a bottle'

Crw, or crwm, ale, beer

Curatio bet carnifica, non coacta, the cure is effected by following the rules of art, not by using violence

Cuscu, a kerchief for covering the head

Currach, or **curragh**, a small skiff, consisting of a slight framework covered with hide or canvas

Cymmrodion, a Welsh society for promoting the native literature and arts, re-established in 1877

Cypress, a thin, transparent kind of crape

Dalmatique, a long, ecclesiastical robe with wide sleeves

Dane, knocked down, struck violently

Deheubarth, the old British name for South Wales

Der alter Herr ist verrückt, the old lord is frantic

Dermid, sons of, the clan Campbell

Destrier, a steed, warhorse

Deus vobiscum, God be with you

Diapré, diapered, variegated — a heraldic term

Doch-an-dorroch, the parting-cup

Doddered, overgrown with parasitic plants

Doe, John, and Richard Roe, the fictitious claimant and defendant in an old English law process (ejectment) for recovering possession of land

Doer, agent, attorney — a Scots law term

Dole, sorrow

Door-cheek, the door-post

Do veniam, I give pardon or leave

Dun, a fortified hill

Dunlap cheese, made at Dunlop, a village on the borders of Ayrshire and Renfrewshire

Durame, Durham

Earn, eagle
Edgeworthstown, young ladies of, the family of which Maria Edgeworth, the novelist, was the brightest ornament
Elfland, fairyland
Elf-stricken, bewitched
Empress-Queen, Maria Theresa, Empress of Austria, Queen of Hungary
En bagatelle, as a trifling matter
Eric poem, receipt for making. *See* Pope's paper in *The Guardian*, No. 78
Ear, rather, sooner
Es spucky, spectres are abroad
Ethnic, heathen, not Christian
Ettrick Shepherd, James Hogg, a Scottish poet (1770-1835)
Euroschawo, a chain of twisted gold links, a mark of chieftainship amongst the Welsh
Evened, compared, lowered
Ex capite lecti, from the head of the bed
Ex cathedra, from the chair

Fabliaux, tales in verse, peculiar to France, 12th to 14th century, and generally satirical in character
Falkirk, where Prince Charles's Highlanders defeated General Hawley in 1746
Fash, trouble
Fey, predestined to death, doomed
Fiançailles, solemn betrothal
Fion, Fingal, the hero of Macpherson's *Ossian*
Flaminian (highway), connected Rome with Rimini on the Adriatic, was made by C. Flaminius in 220 B.C.
Fleam, a kind of lancet
Fleech, to flatter, cajole
Flemings in Pembrokeshire. *See* Pembrokeshire, Flemings in
Fletcher of Salton, one of the most accomplished Scotsmen of his time, a supporter of Monmouth in 1685, and an ardent politician
Foire, a fair
Fontenoy, near Tournai, in Belgium, where the Allies under the Duke of Cumberland were defeated by the French under Marshal Saxe in 1745
Forbears, ancestors
Forthink, to repent of, regret
Fortune's, a tavern in Old Stamp Office Close, off the High Street, Edinburgh
Frampal, unruly
Franklin, a freeholder, yeoman
Fray, to frighten
Fravings, peelings of a deer's horn
Frederick of Prussia, surnamed the 'Great' king of Prussia (1740-1786)

Gaeing back, losing money
Garde Dolourouse, the castle of sorrow or mourning
Gart, caused, made
Gate, way, road, manner
Gaud, an ornament, trinket
Gear, business, affair; property, goods
Geoffrey of Monmouth, an English chronicler or historian of the 12th century
Gillian of Croydon, should be Marian, if the old story of *Grim the Collier of Croydon* is referred to
Giraldus de Barri, or **Giraldus Cambrensis**, a Welsh ecclesiastic and historian of the reign of Henry II.
Glenalvon, a reference to John Home's tragedy of *Douglas* (1756)
Glengarry, Macdonnell of, a supporter of Prince Charles in 1745
Glenlyon, Captain Campbell of, who commanded the party that perpetrated the Massacre of Glencoe
Glenshee, in the northeast of Perthshire
Gloucester (p. 276), no doubt the half-brother of Matilda and uncle of Henry II. is meant, although he died in 1147, more than forty years before the events of this story
Green Man, the title of a comedy, by one Jones, produced at the Haymarket Theatre, London, in 1818, in which Daniel Terry acted 'Mr. Green'
Grishogh, a glowing ember
Grew, a greyhound
Groningen, a town in the north of Holland
Guardian, the periodical written by Steele, Addison, etc. (1713)
Guidon, a small flag or standard
Guilder, a Dutch florin = 1s. 8d.
Gwentland, corresponding to the south-east parts of Wales
Gwydir, or Gwedir, Family. *See History of the Gwydir Family*
Gyre-carlin, a witch

Habergeon, a short coat of mail without sleeves
'Had you but seen,' etc. (p. 401), inscribed on an obelisk near Fort William. *See* Captain E. Burt's *Letters from the North of Scotland*, Letter xxvi.
Hæc nos novimus esse nihil, this we understood to be nothing
Haggard, an untrained or refractory hawk
Hamilton of Bangour, William, Scottish Jacobite poet (1704-1754)
Harley, Edward, second Earl of Oxford, the patron of Prior, Pope, and other writers of his day (1689-1741)
Hengist. *See* Horsa
Heresy of the Mountaineers. *See* Mountaineers, heresy of
Herr Keller-master, Mr. Cellarer. *See* Keller-master
Hinc illæ lachrymæ, hence these tears, that 's where the shoe pinches
Hippocras, wine seasoned with spices
Hippocrates, one of the most celebrated physicians of the ancient Greeks, lived in the 5th century B.C.
History of the Gwydir Family, by Sir John Wynne (1770)
Home, John, Scottish pastor and dramatist (1722-1808)
Horsa, the brother of Hengist, who led the Saxons when they invaded England in the 5th century
Houndsfoot, or hundsfott, a mean scoundrel, villain

HOWELL DHA, Howel the Good, king of Wales during the first half of the 10th century

HUNT COUNTER, to run backwards on the scent, instead of following it up

HYDROMEL, a drink made of honey, diluted with water

'I CARE NOT,' etc. (p. 371), from Ben Jonson, *Every Man in his Humour*, Act i. sc. 4

ICONOCLAST, a religious sect of the Eastern (Roman) Empire, in the 8th century, especially opposed to the use of sacred images

ILK, each

INCHAFFRAY, a ruined abbey, about 8 miles west of Perth

INFARE, or INFAIR, an entertainment given to celebrate entering into a new house; a wedding reception

INQUISITIO POST MORTEM, the inquiry made as to the cause of death

IN TERROREM, as a warning, deterrent to

INUNDATION, GREAT. Flanders was inundated in 1100 or 1108, and Holland in 1170 and 1173; on this last occasion, to which Rose Flammock may be supposed to refer (p. 66), the Zuyder Zee was greatly enlarged

IPSA CORPORA, the very pieces

JAMESON, or JAMESONE, GEORGE, a portrait-painter of the 17th century, sometimes called 'the Scottish Van Dyke'

JANGLER, an idle talker

JENKINS, HENRY, reputed to have been 169 years old at the time of his death in 1670

JERFALCON, or GYRFALCON, the noble falcon used for hawking

JIMPLY, scarcely

JONGLERIE, jugglery

JUDAS MACCABÆUS, a patriotic priest of the Jews, who endeavoured to rouse his people against their conquerors, the kings of Syria, in the 2d century B.C. *See* 'First Book of Maccabees,' chaps. iii.-ix., in the Apocrypha

KAIL-POT, cooking-pot

KAIM OF URIE, or URY, near Stonehaven, in Kincardineshire

KAIN, a tax payabl to the landlord in kind, such as poultry, eggs, etc.

KAISER, emperor

KALE-YARD, vegetable garden

KAMMERER, the head of any domestic department in a large household

KELLER-MASTER, more correctly KELLERMEISTER, cellarer, butler

KENNEL, gutter

KENNETH, CHILDREN OF, the clan Mackenzie

KESTREL, or KESTREL, an inferior kind of hawk—a term of contempt

KIDRON AND SHIHOR. *See* 1 Kings ii. 37

KING SOMEBODY (p. 282), Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon

KINTAIL, the headquarters of the Mackenzie clan in the south-west of Rossshire

KIRKCALDY, in Fifeshire, is called the 'long town,' because it stretches 4 miles along the coast

KISTVAEN, a monumental arrangement of stones marking the burial-place of an ancient British chief

KNIGHT OF THE SWAN, the hero of the French mediæval romance, *The History of Helyas, Knight of the Swan*

LADYKIRK, on the Tweed, 6 miles from Coldstream

LAI, a short legendary tale in verse, song, lay

LANGSIDE, a suburb of Glasgow, where Queen Mary's forces were defeated by those of the Regent Murray on 13th May 1568. See the account in *The Abbot*, chap. xxxvii.

LAPUTA, SAGE OF, an allusion to Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, 'Voyage to Laputa,' chap. v.

LATTEN, a kind of brass or bronze

LAUDERDALE, DUCHESS OF, Lady Dysart, the second wife of John Duke of Lauderdale, in Charles II.'s reign, an ambitious and extravagant woman

LAWING, an inn reckoning

LEGATE A LATERE, an ambassador of the Pope of the highest rank

LEGOURS, grazing-grounds, pastures

LEWIS, LORD, *i.e.* Gordon, son of the second Duke of Gordon, supported Prince Charles in 1745

LEWIS'S HISTORY. *The History of Great Britain*, by John Lewis (1729)

LIMBO LAKE, hades, the infernal or lower world

LITHE-ALOE, mild but good Saxon ale

LLHUYD, or LHUYD, Edward, a Welsh antiquary, author of *Archæologia Britannica* (1707), a learned philological work

LOCHABER AXE, a sort of halberd, a bill-like blade and a hook, both at one end of a long shaft

LOCHIEL, CAMERON OF, a supporter of Prince Charles in 1745

LOLLARD, a religious sect in England, in the 14th century, who were opposed to the use of sacred images

LOMBARD, a merchant or banker from one of the North Italian cities; these so-called Lombards were very active traders from the 12th to the 14th century

LOOTEN, let, permitted

LOUNGER, the periodical written by Mackenzie, Craig, Abercromby, and others (1785-87)

LOWER EMPIRE, the Byzantine, Greek, or Eastern (Roman) Empire

LUCKIE, a title of respect given to old women in Scotland

LURDANE, worthless, stupid

LUSIGNAN, a character in Aaron Hill's *Zara* (1736), an adaptation of Voltaire's *Zaire*

MACCALLAN MHOR, the Earl (Duke) of Argyle, the head of the clan Campbell

MACDHONUIL DHU, or DUIBH, the patronymic of the clan Cameron

MACKENZIE, HENRY, author of *The Man of Feeling* (1771)

MADIN, maiden, never been brought to surrender

MAINS, the home farm and its buildings

MAITLAND, WILLIAM, author of *History of Edinburgh* (1753) and other works

MALVOLIO, a character in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*

MAN, REGINALD OF. *See* Reginald of Man

MANCHET, a small loaf of fine white bread

MANDEVILLE, SIR JOHN, a reputed traveller of the 14th century, who recorded astonishing marvels; but he really copied most of his book from other sources (Friar Odoric, etc.), and so is doubly an unveracious narrator

MANDRIN, LOUIS, celebrated smuggler and bandit of the south of France, broken on the wheel at Valence in 1755

MANGONEL, an engine for throwing huge stones

MARA, in ancient Norse mythology, the nightmare

MARRY GUFF, *i.e.* 'marry go up'—an expression of contempt

MATHRAVEL, or MATHRAFEL, a district of Montgomeryshire

MATURIN, CHARLES ROBERT, author of a tragedy, *Bertram* (1816)

MAUGRE, in spite of

MAUN, must

MEDICUM, physician

MEIDOS, meadows

MEISTER KELLER-MASTER, Master Cellarer. *See* Keller-master

MENSTRUUM, a fluid substance that acts as a solvent

MEZENTIUS, an allusion to Virgil's *Æneid*, Bk. viii. 485

MEZZO TERMINI, half-measures

MINIVAIR, or MINIVER, a mixed or spotted fur, used for trimmings, in the Middle Ages

MIRROR, the periodical written by Mackenzie, Craig, Abercromby, and others (1779-1780)

MISERERE ME, DOMINE, Lord, have mercy upon me

MITHRIDATE, an antidote against poison. Mithridates, king of Pontus, was celebrated for his knowledge of poisons and their antidotes

MIZZLES, measles

MOLIÈRE'S RECIPE, an allusion to a legend that the comedy-writer Molière read his plays in MS. to an old woman, to whose judgment and opinion he attached great value

MONMOUTH, GEOFFREY OF. *See* Geoffrey of Monmouth

MORBUS SONTICUS, a serious disease, affording a valid legal excuse for absence

MORINGER, a family name. The use of the article 'the' before Moringer conforms to a German practice (or habit) of speaking and writing

MORT, the flourish of the trumpet that intimates the death of the game

MORTIER, a knight's bonnet, made of velvet

MOSS, a marshy, boggy place

MOUNTAINEERS, HERESY OF THE, most probably the Waldenses, who dwelt amongst the Alps of Piedmont and Provence, though their movement did not originate until late in the 12th century

MURRAY, WILL, manager of the Theatre-Royal, Edinburgh. *See* Appendix, p. 465

MUSCADINE, a sweet, strong Italian wine

MYSTERY, a sort of religious play or drama of the Middle Ages

NAINSELL, own self

NAJARA, or rather NAVARETTE, fought between Edward the Black Prince and Henry de Trastamare of Castile in 1367

NAKER, a kind of kettle-drum

NARES, nostrils

NETHERBOW, an old city gate of Edinburgh, standing across the High Street half-way between Holyrood and St. Giles's

NOMINIS UMBRA, under the shelter of the name

'NON AUDET,' etc. (p. 159), no one dares to give who has not studied; physicians prescribe medicines and artificers labour at their own craft. Quoted from Horace, *Epistles*, Bk. ii. 1, 115

NON SUM QUALIS ERAM, I am not what I once was

NOR' LOCH, a deep depression below the Castle of Edinburgh, where the Princes Street Gardens now are, was 'improved' in 1763, and again through an Act of Parliament obtained in 1816

NORVAL, a reference to John Home's tragedy of *Douglas* (1756)

NYM, CORPORAL, in Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*

ODOR LUCRI, the savour of gain

ŒDIPUS, son of the king of Thebes (Greece), killed his own father and committed incest with his mother, not knowing either of them

OGILVY, HON. MRS. COLONEL, a lady who 'finished off' the education of young ladies, amongst others Scott's mother

OGLEBY, LORD, a character in *Clandestine Marriage* (1766), by Garrick and Coleman

'OMNI MEMBRORUM DAMNO,' etc. (p. 336), with the loss of all his members, and worse, the loss of mind, which prevents him from recognising either the names of his servants or the faces of his friends. From Juvenal, *Satires*, x. 232-235

ORESTES, slew his mother, who had murdered his father Agamemnon, for which he was seized with madness and haunted by the Furies

OUTSKIRRER, outscourer, scout

OWSEN, oxen

'PAH, AN OUNCE OF CIVET,' etc. (p. 367), from *Lear*, Act iv. sc. 6

PANTLER, the servant who had charge of the bread

PAR AMOURS, in illicit love, for love's sake

PARITOR, the summoner of an ecclesiastical court

PARSONAGE, money paid for the support of a parson, the greater tithes

PARTRIDGE, a character in Fielding's novel, *Tom Jones* (1749)

PAYNIM, pagan, heathen
PEMBROKESHIRE, FLEMINGS IN, colonies of these people were settled in that county by both Henry I. and Henry II. of England
PENDICLE, appendage, dependency
PENNONCELLE, a small pennon or streamer fixed to a spear
PER AMBAGES, by ambiguous methods
PERI BATHOUS, or in full Martinus Scriblerus, *Peri Bathous, or the Art of Sinking in Poetry*, chap. xi., by Pope and others
PERSONÆ STANDI IN JUDICIO, legal status, recognition and responsibility
PERTH, DUKE OF, of the Drummond family, a supporter of Prince Charles in 1745
PERTINAX, SIR. *See* Sir Pertinax
PIGMENT, highly-spiced wine sweetened with honey
PITSCOTTIE, ROBERT LINDSAY OF, author of *Chronicles of Scotland* (down to 1565)
PLACKET, a pocket
POCHAY, a post-chaise
POST (on General Wade's roads, p. 401), Captain Burt, author of *Letters from the North of Scotland* (1754), was believed to be of Irish origin
POMORAGRAINS. *See Guy Mannering*, chap. XXXVI. p. 249
POMPEY IN *MEASURE FOR MEASURE*, in Act iii. sc. 2. Pompey is the name of the clown
PORTE COCHÈRE, the carriage gate and entrance
POTTLE, a two-quart measure, a large tankard
POWELL, DAVID, translated into English Caradoc's (Welsh) *History of Wales* (1774)
POWYS CASTLE, the seat, not of the Duke of Beaufort, but of the Earl of Powis; POWYS LAND, a former kingdom in the south of Wales
PRESES, OR PRÆSES, the president, chairman
PRESTON, OR PRESTONPANS, where Prince Charles's Highlanders defeated General Cope in 1745
PRIOR, MATTHEW, English poet (1664-1721), author of *Henry and Emma*, etc.
PROPALE, to publish, disclose
PROSPERO, a character in Shakespeare's *Tempest*
PTOLEMAIS, Acre, or St. Jean d'Acre, on the coast of Syria. There Archbishop Baldwin died in 1190; he left his private property to be expended for the recovery of Palestine from the Saracens
QUAICH, a small drinking-cup
QUARREL, a square-headed bolt hurled from a military engine
QUHEN, when
QUHILK, which
QUI JURAT, etc. (p. 57), he who sweareth to his neighbour and deceiveth him not
QUIS HABITABIT, etc. (p. 57), Who shall sojourn in Thy tabernacle, who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?
RACHIS, OR RACHES, dogs that hunt by scent
RAMBLER, the periodical conducted and written (1750-52) by Dr. Johnson
RAMILLIES (WIG), ended in a long plait, which had a large bow of ribbon at the top and a smaller one at the bottom
RANDOLPH, LADY (p. 406), a character in John Home's tragedy, *Douglas* (1756)
RAPPEE, a strong kind of snuff
RASCAILLE, base, ignoble
RATTEN, a rat
RECEIPT FOR MAKING EPIC POEM. *See* Epic poem, etc.
REGINALD OF MAN, this king, a descendant of the Norse chief, Goddard Crovan, mentioned in *Peveril of the Peak*, reigned forty years, from 1187
REIVING, pillaging
RENYEIS, reins
REQUIESCANT IN PACE, peace be to their ashes
RESETTING, giving shelter to persons proscribed by, or obnoxious to, the law
REVÊCHE, tart, crabbed
RIDING OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, the formal opening of it by a mounted procession of high dignitaries and constituent members. The last riding, marked by unusual pomp, took place on 6th May 1703
RIGGING-TREE, the principal beam in the roof
ROAST, RULE THE (p. 283), a less common form of the saying 'rule the roost'
ROE, RICHARD. *See* Doe, John, etc.
ROTE, a small lute, the strings of which were played by turning a wheel
ROWING, rocking, rolling
RUDEL, GEOFFREY, a Gascon troubadour of the 12th century, who is said to have died for love of the Countess of Tripoli (in Syria)
RUS IN URBE, the country in the midst of the town
SACRING BELL, the bell rung at the elevation of the host in high mass
SAIN, to pray for a blessing on, bless
ST. ANDREWS, the seat of a university in Fifeshire
ST. CLEMENT'S DAY, 23d November, the festival of St. Clement the Pope
ST. DUNSTAN'S CLOCK, FIGURES ON (p. xxiii), two half-clad giants, armed with clubs, with which they struck the quarters. St. Dunstan's was in Fleet Street, London
ST. HUBERT, the patron saint of those who follow the chase. *See Quentin Durward*, Note 4, p. 435
ST. MARTIN'S TIDE, 11th November
SARSNET, OR SARSENET, kind of thin, soft woven silk
SASSENACH, SAXON, *i.e.* Lowland Scotch or English
SATIS EST, MI FILI, enough, my son
SCANDALUM MAGNATUM, an offence against those in authority

Schelm, rascal, scoundrel
Scoorcora, or **Scuruan**, a conspicuous mountain overlooking Glenshiel, in the extreme south-west of Ross-shire
Scottish Parliament, riding of. *See* Riding, etc.
Sederunt, a meeting
Sennachie, or **seannachie**, a Highland chronicler or genealogist
Sewar, the officer who had charge of the viands at a feast, and provided water for the guests to wash their fingers with
Shairman, chairman, porter to carry a sedan chair, in old Edinburgh generally Highlanders
Shieling, a Highland hut
Shimei and Kidron. *See* 1 Kings ii. 37
Sic itur ad astra, this is the path to heaven
Sidier roy, the red soldier, a private of the English army
Sir Pertinax, *i. e.* Sir Pertinax MacSycophant, in Macklin's *Man of the World* (1781)
Sir Tristrem, Tristram, or **Tristan**, one of the knights of King Arthur's Round Table, nephew of King Mark of Cornwall, and a famous hunter
Skaithis, scathes, hurts, harm
Skirl, to screech, creak
Slaid, slid; or perhaps **staid**, remained behind
Snood, a fillet or riband to bind the hair, worn by unmarried young women in Scotland
Societas mater discordiarum, partnership is the mother of discord
Soldan, sultan, particularly Saladin, the enemy of the Crusaders
Spectator, the periodical written by Addison, Steele, etc. (1711-1712)
Spontoon, a sort of half-pike carried by certain officers in the British army
Sporran, or **sporran mol-lach**, the goat-skin pouch worn by Highlanders suspended from the waist
Springald, a youth
Staill, the main body of the hunting-party
Stewart, John Roy, a supporter of Prince Charles in 1745
Stilts (of a plough), handles
Stirk, a young bullock
Strath, a valley
Sub vexillo, etc. (p. 342), under the royal standard in the battle near Branxton, *i. e.* Flodden Field
Surquedry, self-importance, assumption, arrogance
Susannah (**chaste**). *See* in The Apocrypha the book entitled 'The History of Susanna'
Swan, Knight of. *See* Knight of the Swan

Tabatière, a snuff-box
Tacksman, a higher class of tenant
Taliessin, one of the most renowned of the ancient Welsh bards
Tauridor, or **torreador**, a Spanish bull-fighter, especially one who fights on horseback
Taymouth Castle, near the north end of Loch Tay in Perthshire, the seat of the Earl of Breadalbane
Teedling, humming
Teinds, tithes
Tester, sixpenny piece
'The noble Mortimer,' etc. (p. 474), from *Henry IV.*, Part I. Act i. sc. 1
Threave, two dozen, or an indefinitely large number
Thrum bonnet, a cap made of waste yarn
Tieck, Johann Ludwig, one of the chiefs (1773-1853) of the Romantic School of Literature in Germany
Timmerman. Timmer (Danish, *tömmer*) is Scottish for timber, wood
Tindis, horns of a stag
Tintadgel, or **Tintagel**, King Arthur's castle on the west coast of Cornwall
Toddis, or **tods**, foxes
Tongue-pad, keep (her) tongue trotting, going
Touchstone, the clown in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*
Toustie, testy, irascible
Train, the tail of a hawk
Traist servandis, trusty servants
Tre, wood
Trebuchet, a military engine for hurling stones and bolts
Tremor cordis, palpitations of the heart
Tres faciunt collegium, it takes three (monks) to make a college
Trshornish, more correctly **Trshinish**, a group of small islands off the west coast of Mull
Trow, to trow, think
Tristrem, Sir. *See* Sir Tristrem
Turnpike stairs, a winding or spiral staircase
Twelfth Day, Epiphany, the twelfth day after Christmas Day
Tyne, to lose

Uckelwyr, men of high stature, noble chiefs
Urie, Kaim of. *See* Kaim of Urie
Usquebaugh, whisky

Valet-de-place, one who acts temporarily as valet to a stranger staying in a town
Vaward, the van, front or early part
Vramos, caracco! presumably for **Vramos caracco**, let us see, old man
Vicarage, the smaller tithes
Vins extraordinaires, rare, uncommon wines
Virgil's shepherd (p. 333), an allusion to *Eclogues*, i. 28-30
Vis unita fortior, united strength is stronger
Vix ea nostra voco, I declare this is hardly our own
Volenti non fit injuria, to him who is willing there is no injury done
Vortigern, the British prince who invited over Hengist and married his daughter Rowena

Wade, General, his military road. In the years 1729-1730 General Wade laid out and made several good roads through the Highlands as a means of pacification
Walker's, a tavern in

Writer's Court, off the High Street, Edinburgh

Wallachia, by G. W. H. Häring, better known as Willibald Alexis, a German novelist (1797-1870)

Wan, won, gained

Wanion, with a, mischief befall thee! with a malediction upon thee!

Water-purpie, common brook-lime, a species of *Veronica*

Wean, infant, little child

Weissenhorn, a small Bavarian town, about 10 miles south-east of Ulm on the Danube

Weem, a few

Whilk, which

White cockade, the badge of the Stuarts and their adherents

Wilkie, Sir David, Scottish painter, a friend of Sir Walter Scott's

Windows, tax on, the forerunner of the inhabited house duty, was levied from 1795 to 1851

Wolf-sucd, wolf-brood, *i.e.* wolf-cub

Wunna, will not

Yaud, a mare

Y Mac Y Mhor, the country of the Mackenzies of Seaforth, in the south-west of Ross-shire

Ywroken, wreaked, accomplished

Zimmermann, a German-Swiss writer, author of a celebrated book on *Solitude* (1755)

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THE

WAVERLEY NOVELS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT

VOLUME XX

THE TALISMAN

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INTRODUCTION TO THE TALISMAN

THE Betrothed did not greatly please one or two friends, who thought that it did not well correspond to the general title of *The Crusaders*. They urged, therefore, that, without direct allusion to the manners of the Eastern tribes, and to the romantic conflicts of the period, the title of a *Tale of the Crusaders* would resemble the playbill which is said to have announced the tragedy of Hamlet, the character of the Prince of Denmark being left out. On the other hand, I felt the difficulty of giving a vivid picture of a part of the world with which I was almost totally unacquainted, unless by early recollections of the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments;* and not only did I labour under the incapacity of ignorance, in which, as far as regards Eastern manners, I was as thickly wrapped as an Egyptian in his fog; but my contemporaries were, many of them, as much enlightened upon the subject as if they had been inhabitants of the favoured land of Goshen. The love of travelling had pervaded all ranks, and carried the subject of Britain into all quarters of the world. Greece, so attractive by its remains of art, by its struggles for freedom against a Mohammedan tyrant, by its very name, where every fountain had its classical legend — Palestine, endeared to the imagination by yet more sacred remembrances, had been of late surveyed by British eyes, and described by recent travellers. Had I, therefore, attempted the difficult task of substituting manners of my own invention, instead of the genuine costume of the East, almost every traveller I met, who had extended his route beyond what was anciently called 'the grand tour,' had acquired a right, by ocular inspection, to chastise me for my presumption. Every member of the Travellers' Club, who could pretend to have thrown his shoe over Edom, was, by having done so, constituted my lawful critic and corrector. It occurred, therefore, that, where the author of *Anastasius*, as well as he of *Hadji Baba*,

had described the manners and vices of the Eastern nations, not only with fidelity, but with the humour of Le Sage and the ludicrous power of Fielding himself, one who was a perfect stranger to the subject must necessarily produce an unfavourable contrast. The Poet Laureate also, in the charming tale of *Thalaba*, had shown how extensive might be the researches of a person of acquirements and talent, by dint of investigation alone, into the ancient doctrines, history, and manners of the Eastern countries, in which we are probably to look for the cradle of mankind; Moore, in his *Lalla Rookh*, had successfully trod the same path; in which, too, Byron, joining ocular experience to extensive reading, had written some of his most attractive poems. In a word, the Eastern themes had been already so successfully handled by those who were acknowledged to be masters of their craft, that I was diffident of making the attempt.

These were powerful objections, nor did they lose force when they became the subject of anxious reflection, although they did not finally prevail. The arguments on the other side were, that though I had no hope of rivalling the contemporaries whom I have mentioned, yet it occurred to me as possible to acquit myself of the task I was engaged in without entering into competition with them.

The period relating more immediately to the Crusades which I at last fixed upon was that at which the warlike character of Richard I., wild and generous, a pattern of chivalry, with all its extravagant virtues and its no less absurd errors, was opposed to that of Saladin, in which the Christian and English monarch showed all the cruelty and violence of an Eastern sultan, and Saladin, on the other hand, displayed the deep policy and prudence of a European sovereign, whilst each contended which should excel the other in the knightly qualities of bravery and generosity. This singular contrast afforded, as the Author conceived, materials for a work of fiction possessing peculiar interest. One of the inferior characters introduced was a supposed relation of Richard Cœur-de-Lion — a violation of the truth of history which gave offence to Mr. Mills, the author of the *History of Chivalry and the Crusades*, who was not, it may be presumed, aware that romantic fiction naturally includes the power of such invention, which is indeed one of the requisites of the art.

Prince David of Scotland, who was actually in the host, and was the hero of some very romantic adventures on his way

home, was also pressed into my service, and constitutes one of my *dramatis personæ*.

It is true I had already brought upon the field him of the Lion Heart. But it was in a more private capacity than he was here to be exhibited in *The Talisman:* then as a disguised knight, now in the avowed character of a conquering monarch; so that I doubted not a name so dear to Englishmen as that of King Richard I. might contribute to their amusement for more than once.[1]

I had access to all which antiquity believed, whether of reality or fable, on the subject of that magnificent warrior, who was the proudest boast of Europe and their chivalry, and with whose dreadful name the Saracens, according to a historian of their own country, were wont to rebuke their startled horses. 'Do you think,' said they, 'that King Richard is on the track, that you spring so wildly from it?' The most curious register of the history of King Richard is an ancient romance, translated originally from the Norman, and at first certainly having a pretence to be termed a work of chivalry, but latterly becoming stuffed with the most astonishing and monstrous fables. There is perhaps no metrical romance upon record where, along with curious and genuine history, are mingled more absurd and exaggerated incidents. We have placed in the Appendix the passage of the romance in which Richard figures as an ogre, or literal cannibal.

A principal incident in the story is that from which the title is derived. Of all people who ever lived, the Persians were perhaps most remarkable for their unshaken credulity in amulets, spells, periapts, and similar charms, framed, it was said, under the influence of particular planets, and bestowing high medical powers, as well as the means of advancing men's fortunes in various manners. A story of this kind, relating to a crusader of eminence, is often told in the west of Scotland, and the relic alluded to is still in existence, and even yet held in veneration.

Sir Simon Lockhart of Lee and Cartland made a considerable figure in the reigns of Robert the Bruce and of his son David. He was one of the chief of that band of Scottish chivalry who accompanied James, the Good Lord Douglas, on his expedition to the Holy Land, with the heart of King Robert Bruce. Douglas, impatient to get at the Saracens, entered into war with those of Spain, and was killed there. Lockhart proceeded to the Holy Land with such Scottish knights as had escaped the

[1] [See Lockhart, *Life of Scott*, vol. vii. p. 386.]

fate of their leader, and assisted for some time in the wars against the Saracens.

The following adventure is said by tradition to have befallen him. He made prisoner in battle an emir of considerable wealth and consequence. The aged mother of the captive came to the Christian camp, to redeem her son from his state of captivity. Lockhart is said to have fixed the price at which his prisoner should ransom himself; and the lady, pulling out a large embroidered purse, proceeded to tell down the ransom, like a mother who pays little respect to gold in comparison of her son's liberty. In this operation, a pebble inserted in a coin, some say of the Lower Empire, fell out of the purse, and the Saracen matron testified so much haste to recover it as gave the Scottish knight a high idea of its value, when compared with gold or silver. 'I will not consent,' he said, 'to grant your son's liberty, unless that amulet be added to his ransom.' The lady not only consented to this, but explained to Sir Simon Lockhart the mode in which the talisman was to be used, and the uses to which it might be put. The water in which it was dipt operated as a styptic, as a febrifuge, and possessed several other properties as a medical talisman.

Sir Simon Lockhart, after much experience of the wonders which it wrought, brought it to his own country, and left it to his heirs, by whom, and by Clydesdale in general, it was, and is still distinguished by the name of the Lee Penny,[1] from the name of his native seat of Lee.

The most remarkable part of its history, perhaps, was, that it so especially escaped condemnation when the Church of Scotland chose to impeach many other cures which savoured of the miraculous, as occasioned by sorcery, and censured the appeal to them, 'excepting only that to the amulet called the Lee Penny, to which it had pleased God to annex certain healing virtues which the Church did not presume to condemn.' It still, as has been said, exists, and its powers are sometimes resorted to. Of late they have been chiefly restricted to the cure of persons bitten by mad dogs; and as the illness in such cases frequently arises from imagination, there can be no reason for doubting that water which has been poured on the Lee Penny furnishes a congenial cure.

Such is the tradition concerning the talisman, which the Author has taken the liberty to vary in applying it to his own purposes.

[1] See Note 1.

Considerable liberties have also been taken with the truth of history, both with respect to Conrade of Montserrat's life as well as his death. That Conrade, however, was reckoned the enemy of Richard is agreed both in history and romance. The general opinion of the terms upon which they stood may be guessed from the proposal of the Saracens, that the Marquis of Montserrat should be invested with certain parts of Syria, which they were to yield to the Christians. Richard, according to the romance which bears his name, 'could no longer repress his fury. "The Marquis," he said, "was a traitor, who had robbed the Knights Hospitallers of sixty thousand pounds, the present of his father Henry; that he was a renegade, whose treachery had occasioned the loss of Acre"; and he concluded by a solemn oath, that he would cause him to be drawn to pieces by wild horses, if he should ever venture to pollute the Christian camp by his presence. Philip attempted to intercede in favour of the Marquis, and throwing down his glove, offered to become a pledge for his fidelity to the Christians; but his offer was rejected, and he was obliged to give way to Richard's impetuosity.' — [Ellis, *Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances*, 1805, vol. ii. p. 230.]

Conrade of Montserrat makes a considerable figure in those wars, and was at length put to death by one of the followers of the Scheik, or Old Man of the Mountain; nor did Richard remain free of the suspicion of having instigated his death.

It may be said, in general, that most of the incidents introduced in the following tale are fictitious; and that reality, where it exists, is only retained in the characters of the piece.

1*st July* 1832.

THE TALISMAN

CHAPTER I

They, too, retired
To the wilderness, but 't was with arms.
Paradise Regained.

THE burning sun of Syria had not yet attained its highest point in the horizon, when a knight of the Red Cross, who had left his distant northern home and joined the host of the Crusaders in Palestine, was pacing slowly along the sandy deserts which lie in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, or, as it is called, the Lake Asphaltites, where the waves of the Jordan pour themselves into an inland sea, from which there is no discharge of waters.

The warlike pilgrim had toiled among cliffs and precipices during the earlier part of the morning; more lately, issuing from those rocky and dangerous defiles, he had entered upon that great plain, where the accursed cities provoked, in ancient days, the direct and dreadful vengeance of the Omnipotent.

The toil, the thirst, the dangers of the way were forgotten, as the traveller recalled the fearful catastrophe which had converted into an arid and dismal wilderness the fair and fertile valley of Siddim, once well watered, even as the garden of the Lord, now a parched and blighted waste, condemned to eternal sterility.

Crossing himself as he viewed the dark mass of rolling waters, in colour as in quality unlike those of every other lake, the traveller shuddered as he remembered that beneath these sluggish waves lay the once proud cities of the plain, whose grave was dug by the thunder of the heavens, or the eruption of subterraneous fire, and whose remains were hid, even by that sea which holds no living fish in its bosom, bears no skiff

on its surface, and, as if its own dreadful bed were the only fit receptacle for its sullen waters, sends not, like other lakes, a tribute to the ocean. The whole land around, as in the days of Moses, was 'brimstone and salt; it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon'; the land as well as the lake might be termed dead, as producing nothing having resemblance to vegetation; and even the very air was entirely devoid of its ordinary winged inhabitants, deterred probably by the odour of bitumen and sulphur, which the burning sun exhaled from the waters of the lake in steaming clouds, frequently assuming the appearance of waterspouts. Masses of the slimy and sulphureous substance called naphtha, which floated idly on the sluggish and sullen waves, supplied those rolling clouds with new vapours, and afforded awful testimony to the truth of the Mosaic history.

Upon this scene of desolation the sun shone with almost intolerable splendour, and all living nature seemed to have hidden itself from the rays, excepting the solitary figure which moved through the flitting sand at a foot's pace, and appeared the sole breathing thing on the wide surface of the plain. The dress of the rider and the accoutrements of his horse were peculiarly unfit for the traveller in such a country. A coat of linked mail, with long sleeves, plated gauntlets, and a steel breastplate, had not been esteemed a sufficient weight of armour: there was also his triangular shield suspended round his neck, and his barred helmet of steel, over which he had a hood and collar of mail, which was drawn around the warrior's shoulders and throat, and filled up the vacancy between the hauberk and the head-piece. His lower limbs were sheathed, like his body, in flexible mail, securing the legs and thighs, while the feet rested in plated shoes, which corresponded with the gauntlets. A long, broad, straight-shaped, double-edged falchion, with a handle formed like a cross, corresponded with a stout poniard on the other side. The knight also bore, secured to his saddle, with one end resting on his stirrup, the long steel-headed lance, his own proper weapon, which, as he rode, projected backwards, and displayed its little pennoncelle, to dally with the faint breeze, or drop in the dead calm. To this cumbrous equipment must be added a surcoat of embroidered cloth, much frayed and worn, which was thus far useful, that it excluded the burning rays of the sun from the armour, which they would otherwise have rendered intolerable to the wearer. The surcoat bore, in several places, the arms of the owner,

although much defaced. These seemed to be a couchant leopard, with the motto, 'I sleep — wake me not.' An outline of the same device might be traced on his shield, though many a blow had almost effaced the painting. The flat top of his cumbrous cylindrical helmet was unadorned with any crest. In retaining their own unwieldy defensive armour, the northern Crusaders seemed to set at defiance the nature of the climate and country to which they had come to war.

The accoutrements of the horse were scarcely less massive and unwieldy than those of the rider. The animal had a heavy saddle plated with steel, uniting in front with a species of breast-plate, and behind with defensive armour made to cover the loins. Then there was a steel axe, or hammer, called a mace-of-arms, and which hung to the saddle-bow; the reins were secured by chain-work, and the front-stall of the bridle was a steel plate, with apertures for the eyes and nostrils, having in the midst a short, sharp pike, projecting from the forehead of the horse like the horn of the fabulous unicorn.

But habit had made the endurance of this load of panoply a second nature both to the knight and his gallant charger. Numbers, indeed, of the Western warriors who hurried to Palestine died ere they became inured to the burning climate; but there were others to whom that climate became innocent and even friendly, and among this fortunate number was the solitary horseman who now traversed the border of the Dead Sea.

Nature, which cast his limbs in a mould of uncommon strength, fitted to wear his linked hauberk with as much ease as if the meshes had been formed of cobwebs, had endowed him with a constitution as strong as his limbs, and which bade defiance to almost all changes of climate, as well as to fatigue and privations of every kind. His disposition seemed, in some degree, to partake of the qualities of his bodily frame; and as the one possessed great strength and endurance, united with the power of violent exertion, the other, under a calm and undisturbed semblance, had much of the fiery and enthusiastic love of glory which constituted the principal attribute of the renowned Norman line, and had rendered them sovereigns in every corner of Europe where they had drawn their adventurous swords.

It was not, however, to all the race that fortune proposed such tempting rewards; and those obtained by the solitary knight during two years' campaign in Palestine had been only temporal fame, and, as he was taught to believe, spiritual privileges. Meantime, his slender stock of money had melted

away, the rather that he did not pursue any of the ordinary modes by which the followers of the Crusade condescended to recruit their diminished resources at the expense of the people of Palestine: he exacted no gifts from the wretched natives for sparing their possessions when engaged in warfare with the Saracens, and he had not availed himself of any opportunity of enriching himself by the ransom of prisoners of consequence. The small train which had followed him from his native country had been gradually diminished, as the means of maintaining them disappeared, and his only remaining squire was at present on a sick-bed, and unable to attend his master, who travelled, as we have seen, singly and alone. This was of little consequence to the Crusader, who was accustomed to consider his good sword as his safest escort, and devout thoughts as his best companion.

Nature had, however, her demands for refreshment and repose, even on the iron frame and patient disposition of the Knight of the Sleeping Leopard; and at noon, when the Dead Sea lay at some distance on his right, he joyfully hailed the sight of two or three palm-trees, which arose beside the well which was assigned for his mid-day station. His good horse, too, which had plodded forward with the steady endurance of his master, now lifted his head, expanded his nostrils, and quickened his pace, as if he snuffed afar off the living waters, which marked the place of repose and refreshment. But labour and danger were doomed to intervene ere the horse or horseman reached the desired spot.

As the Knight of the Couchant Leopard continued to fix his eyes attentively on the yet distant cluster of palm-trees, it seemed to him as if some object was moving among them. The distant form separated itself from the trees, which partly hid its motions, and advanced towards the knight with a speed which soon showed a mounted horseman, whom his turban, long spear, and green caftan floating in the wind, on his nearer approach, showed to be a Saracen cavalier. 'In the desert,' saith an Eastern proverb, 'no man meets a friend.' The Crusader was totally indifferent whether the infidel, who now approached on his gallant barb, as if borne on the wings of an eagle, came as friend or foe; perhaps, as a vowed champion of the Cross, he might rather have preferred the latter. He disengaged his lance from his saddle, seized it with the right hand, placed it in rest with its point half elevated, gathered up the reins in the left, waked his horse's mettle with the spur, and prepared

THE DEAD SEA.
From a painting by Roberts.

to encounter the stranger with the calm self-confidence belonging to the victor in many contests.

The Saracen came on at the speedy gallop of an Arab horseman, managing his steed more by his limbs and the inflection of his body than by any use of the reins, which hung loose in his left hand; so that he was enabled to wield the light round buckler of the skin of the rhinoceros, ornamented with silver loops, which he wore on his arm, swinging it as if he meant to oppose its slender circle to the formidable thrust of the Western lance. His own long spear was not couched or levelled like that of his antagonist, but grasped by the middle with his right hand, and brandished at arm's length above his head. As the cavalier approached his enemy at full career, he seemed to expect that the Knight of the Leopard should put his horse to the gallop to encounter him. But the Christian knight, well acquainted with the customs of Eastern warriors, did not mean to exhaust his good horse by any unnecessary exertion; and, on the contrary, made a dead halt, confident that, if the enemy advanced to the actual shock, his own weight, and that of his powerful charger, would give him sufficient advantage, without the additional momentum of rapid motion. Equally sensible and apprehensive of such a probable result, the Saracen cavalier, when he had approached towards the Christian within twice the length of his lance, wheeled his steed to the left with inimitable dexterity, and rode twice around his antagonist, who, turning without quitting his ground, and presenting his front constantly to his enemy, frustrated his attempts to attack him on an unguarded point; so that the Saracen, wheeling his horse, was fain to retreat to the distance of a hundred yards. A second time, like a hawk attacking a heron, the Heathen renewed the charge, and a second time was fain to retreat without coming to a close struggle. A third time he approached in the same manner, when the Christian knight, desirous to terminate this illusory warfare, in which he might at length have been worn out by the activity of his foeman, suddenly seized the mace which hung at his saddle-bow, and, with a strong hand and unerring aim, hurled it against the head of the Emir, for such and not less his enemy appeared. The Saracen was just aware of the formidable missile in time to interpose his light buckler betwixt the mace and his head; but the violence of the blow forced the buckler down on his turban, and though that defence also contributed to deaden its violence, the Saracen was beaten from his horse. Ere the Christian could avail himself

of this mishap, his nimble foeman sprung from the ground, and, calling on his steed, which instantly returned to his side, he leaped into his seat without touching the stirrup, and regained all the advantage of which the Knight of the Leopard hoped to deprive him. But the latter had in the meanwhile recovered his mace, and the Eastern cavalier, who remembered the strength and dexterity with which his antagonist had aimed it, seemed to keep cautiously out of reach of that weapon, of which he had so lately felt the force, while he showed his purpose of waging a distant warfare with missile weapons of his own. Planting his long spear in the sand at a distance from the scene of combat, he strung, with great address, a short bow, which he carried at his back, and putting his horse to the gallop, once more described two or three circles of a wider extent than formerly, in the course of which he discharged six arrows at the Christian with such unerring skill that the goodness of his harness alone saved him from being wounded in as many places. The seventh shaft apparently found a less perfect part of the armour, and the Christian dropped heavily from his horse. But what was the surprise of the Saracen, when, dismounting to examine the condition of his prostrate enemy, he found himself suddenly within the grasp of the European, who had had recourse to this artifice to bring his enemy within his reach! Even in this deadly grapple the Saracen was saved by his agility and presence of mind. He unloosed the sword-belt, in which the Knight of the Leopard had fixed his hold, and, thus eluding his fatal grasp, mounted his horse, which seemed to watch his motions with the intelligence of a human being, and again rode off. But in the last encounter the Saracen had lost his sword and his quiver of arrows, both of which were attached to the girdle, which he was obliged to abandon. He had also lost his turban in the struggle. These disadvantages seemed to incline the Moslem to a truce: he approached the Christian with his right hand extended, but no longer in a menacing attitude.

'There is truce betwixt our nations,' he said, in the *lingua franca* commonly used for the purpose of communication with the Crusaders; 'wherefore should there be war betwixt thee and me? Let there be peace betwixt us.'

'I am well contented,' answered he of the Couchant Leopard; 'but what security dost thou offer that thou wilt observe the truce?'

'The word of a follower of the Prophet was never broken,'

answered the Emir. 'It is thou, brave Nazarene, from whom I should demand security, did I not know that treason seldom dwells with cour.. 'e.'

The Crusader felt that the confidence of the Moslem made him ashamed of his own doubts.

'By the cross of my sword,' he said, laying his hand on the weapon as he spoke, 'I will be true companion to thee, Saracen, while our fortune wills that we remain in company together.'

'By Mahommed, Prophet of God, and by Allah, God of the Prophet,' replied his late foeman, 'there is not treachery in my heart towards thee. And now wend we to yonder fountain, for the hour of rest is at hand, and the stream had hardly touched my lip when I was called to battle by thy approach.'

The Knight of the Couchant Leopard yielded a ready and courteous assent; and the late foes, without an angry look or gesture of doubt, rode side by side to the little cluster of palm-trees.

CHAPTER II

TIMES of danger have always, and in a peculiar degree, their seasons of good-will and of security; and this was particularly so in the ancient feudal ages, in which, as the manners of the period had assigned war to be the chief and most worthy occupation of mankind, the intervals of peace, or rather of truce, were highly relished by those warriors to whom they were seldom granted, and endeared by the very circumstances which rendered them transitory. It is not worth while preserving any permanent enmity against a foe whom a champion has fought with to-day, and may again stand in bloody opposition to on the next morning. The time and situation afforded so much room for the ebullition of violent passions, that men, unless when peculiarly opposed to each other, or provoked by the recollection of private and individual wrongs, cheerfully enjoyed in each other's society the brief intervals of pacific intercourse which a warlike life admitted.

The distinction of religions, nay, the fanatical zeal which animated the followers of the Cross and of the Crescent against each other, was much softened by a feeling so natural to generous combatants, and especially cherished by the spirit of chivalry. This last strong impulse had extended itself gradually from the Christians to their mortal enemies the Saracens, both of Spain and of Palestine. The latter were indeed no longer the fanatical savages who had burst from the centre of Arabian deserts, with the sabre in one hand and the Koran in the other, to inflict death or the faith of Mahommed, or, at the best, slavery and tribute, upon all who dared to oppose the belief of the prophet of Mecca. These alternatives indeed had been offered to the unwarlike Greeks and Syrians; but in contending with the western Christians, animated by a zeal as fiery as their own, and possessed of as unconquerable courage, address, and success in arms, the Saracens gradually caught a part of their manners, and especially of those chivalrous

observances which were so well calculated to charm the minds of a proud and conquering people. They had their tournaments and games of chivalry; they had even their knights, or some rank analogous; and, above all, the Saracens observed their plighted faith with an accuracy which might sometimes put to shame those who owned a better religion. Their truces, whether national or betwixt individuals, were faithfully observed; and thus it was that war, in itself perhaps the greatest of evils, yet gave occasion for display of good faith, generosity, clemency, and even kindly affections, which less frequently occur in more tranquil periods, where the passions of men, experiencing wrongs or entertaining quarrels which cannot be brought to instant decision, are apt to smoulder for a length of time in the bosoms of those who are so unhappy as to be their prey.

It was under the influence of these milder feelings, which soften the horrors of warfare, that the Christian and Saracen, who had so lately done their best for each other's mutual destruction, rode at a slow pace towards the fountain of palm-trees, to which the Knight of the Couchant Leopard had been tending, when interrupted in mid-passage by his fleet and dangerous adversary. Each was wrapt for some time in his own reflections, and took breath after an encounter which had threatened to be fatal to one or both; and their good horses seemed no less to enjoy the interval of repose. That of the Saracen, however, though he had been forced into much the more violent and extended sphere of motion, appeared to have suffered less from fatigue than the charger of the European knight. The sweat hung still clammy on the limbs of the last, when those of the noble Arab were completely dried by the interval of tranquil exercise, all saving the foam-flakes which were still visible on his bridle and housings. The loose soil on which he trode so much augmented the distress of the Christian's horse, heavily loaded by his own armour and the weight of his rider, that the latter jumped from his saddle, and led his charger along the deep dust of the loamy soil, which was burnt in the sun into a substance more impalpable than the finest sand, and thus gave the faithful horse refreshment at the expense of his own additional toil; for, iron-sheathed as he was, he sunk over the mailed shoes at every step which he placed on a surface so light and unresisting.

'You are right,' said the Saracen, and it was the first word that either had spoken since their truce was concluded — 'your strong horse deserves your care; but what do you in the

desert with an animal which sinks over the fetlock at every step, as if he would plant each foot deep as the root of a date-tree?'

'Thou speakest rightly, Saracen,' said the Christian knight, not delighted at the tone with which the infidel criticised his favourite steed — 'rightly, according to thy knowledge and observation. But my good horse hath ere now borne me, in mine own land, over as wide a lake as thou seest yonder spread out behind us, yet not wet one hair above his hoof.'

The Saracen looked at him with as much surprise as his manners permitted him to testify, which was only expressed by a slight approach to a disdainful smile, that hardly curled perceptibly the broad thick mustachio which enveloped his upper lip.

'It is justly spoken,' he said, instantly composing himself to his usual serene gravity: 'list to a Frank, and hear a fable.'

'Thou art not courteous, misbeliever,' replied the Crusader, 'to doubt the word of a dubbed knight; and were it not that thou speakest in ignorance, and not in malice, our truce had its ending ere it is well begun. Thinkest thou I tell thee an untruth when I say that I, one of five hundred horsemen, armed in complete mail, have ridden — ay, and ridden for miles, upon water as solid as the crystal and ten times less brittle?'

'What wouldst thou tell me?' answered the Moslem. 'Yonder inland sea thou dost point at is peculiar in this, that, by the especial curse of God, it suffereth nothing to sink in its waves, but wafts them away, and casts them on its margin; but neither the Dead Sea nor any of the seven oceans which environ the earth will endure on their surface the pressure of a horse's foot, more than the Red Sea endured to sustain the advance of Pharaoh and his host.'

'You speak truth after your knowledge, Saracen,' said the Christian knight; 'and yet, trust me, I fable not, according to mine. Heat in this climate converts the soil into something almost as unstable as water; and in my land cold often converts the water itself into a substance as hard as rock. Let us speak of this no longer; for the thoughts of the calm, clear, blue refulgence of a winter's lake, glimmering to stars and moonbeam, aggravate the horrors of this fiery desert, where, methinks, the very air which we breathe is like the vapour of a fiery furnace seven times heated.'

The Saracen looked on him with some attention, as if to discover in what sense he was to understand words which to him

must have appeared either to contain something of mystery or of imposition. At length he seemed determined in what manner to receive the language of his new companion.

'You are,' he said, 'of a nation that loves to laugh, and you make sport with yourselves and with others by telling what is impossible, and reporting what never chanced. Thou art one of the knights of France, who hold it for glee and pastime to "gab,"[1] as they term it, of exploits that are beyond human power. I were wrong to challenge, for the time, the privilege of thy speech, since boasting is more natural to thee than truth.'

'I am not of their land, neither of their fashion,' said the knight, 'which is, as thou well sayest, to "gab" of that which they dare not undertake, or undertaking cannot perfect. But in this I have imitated their folly, brave Saracen, that, in talking to thee of what thou canst not comprehend, I have, even in speaking most simple truth, fully incurred the character of a braggart in thy eyes; so, I pray you, let my words pass.'

They had now arrived at the knot of palm-trees, and the fountain which welled out from beneath their shade in sparkling profusion.

We have spoken of a moment of truce in the midst of war; and this, a spot of beauty in the midst of a sterile desert, was scarce less dear to the imagination. It was a scene which, perhaps, would elsewhere have deserved little notice; but as the single speck, in a boundless horizon, which promised the refreshment of shade and living water, these blessings, held cheap where they are common, rendered the fountain and its neighbourhood a little paradise. Some generous or charitable hand, ere yet the evil days of Palestine began, had walled in and arched over the fountain, to preserve it from being absorbed in the earth, or choked by the flitting clouds of dust with which the least breath of wind covered the desert. The arch was now broken and partly ruinous; but it still so far projected over and covered in the fountain, that it excluded the sun in a great measure from its waters, which, hardly touched by a straggling beam, while all around was blazing, lay in a steady repose, alike delightful to the eye and the imagination. Stealing from under the arch, they were first received in a marble basin, much defaced indeed, but still cheering the eye, by showing that the place was anciently considered as a station, that the hand of man had been there, and

[1] See Gab, Gaber. Note 2.

that man's accommodation had been in some measure attended to. The thirsty and weary traveller was reminded by these signs that others had suffered similar difficulties, reposed in the same spot, and, doubtless, found their way in safety to a more fertile country. Again, the scarce visible current which escaped from the basin served to nourish the few trees which surrounded the fountain, and where it sunk into the ground and disappeared its refreshing presence was acknowledged by a carpet of velvet verdure.

In this delightful spot the two warriors halted, and each, after his own fashion, proceeded to relieve his horse from saddle, bit, and rein, and permitted the animals to drink at the basin, ere they refreshed themselves from the fountain-head, which arose under the vault. They then suffered the steeds to go loose, confident that their interest, as well as their domesticated habits, would prevent their straying from the pure water and fresh grass.

Christian and Saracen next sat down together on the turf, and produced each the small allowance of store which they carried for their own refreshment. Yet, ere they severally proceeded to their scanty meal, they eyed each other with that curiosity which the close and doubtful conflict in which they had been so lately engaged was calculated to inspire. Each was desirous to measure the strength, and form some estimate of the character, of an adversary so formidable; and each was compelled to acknowledge that, had he fallen in the conflict, it had been by a noble hand.

The champions formed a striking contrast to each other in person and features, and might have formed no inaccurate representatives of their different nations. The Frank seemed a powerful man, built after the ancient Gothic cast of form, with light brown hair, which, on the removal of his helmet, was seen to curl thick and profusely over his head. His features had acquired, from the hot climate, a hue much darker than those parts of his neck which were less frequently exposed to view, or than was warranted by his full and well-opened blue eye, the colour of his hair, and of the mustachios which thickly shaded his upper lip, while his chin was carefully divested of beard, after the Norman fashion. His nose was Grecian and well formed; his mouth rather large in proportion, but filled with well-set, strong, and beautifully white teeth; his head small, and set upon the neck with much grace. His age could not exceed thirty, but, if the effects of toil and climate were allowed

for, might be three or four years under that period. His form was tall, powerful, and athletic, like that of a man whose strength might, in later life, become unwieldy, but which was hitherto united with lightness and activity. His hands, when he withdrew the mailed gloves, were long, fair, and well proportioned ; the wrist-bones peculiarly large and strong, and the arms remarkably well shaped and brawny. A military hardihood, and careless frankness of expression, characterised his language and his motions ; and his voice had the tone of one more accustomed to command than to obey, and who was in the habit of expressing his sentiments aloud and boldly, whenever he was called upon to announce them.

The Saracen Emir formed a marked and striking contrast with the Western Crusader. His stature was indeed above the middle size, but he was at least three inches shorter than the European, whose size approached the gigantic. His slender limbs, and long spare hands and arms, though well proportioned to his person, and suited to the style of his countenance, did not at first aspect promise the display of vigour and elasticity which the Emir had lately exhibited. But, on looking more closely, his limbs, where exposed to view, seemed divested of all that was fleshy or cumbersome ; so that nothing being left but bone, brawn, and sinew, it was a frame fitted for exertion and fatigue, far beyond that of a bulky champion, whose strength and size are counterbalanced by weight, and who is exhausted by his own exertions. The countenance of the Saracen naturally bore a general national resemblance to the Eastern tribe from whom he descended, and was as unlike as possible to the exaggerated terms in which the minstrels of the day were wont to represent the infidel champions, and the fabulous description which a sister art still presents as the Saracen's Head upon sign-posts. His features were small, well formed, and delicate, though deeply embrowned by the Eastern sun, and terminated by a flowing and curled black beard, which seemed trimmed with peculiar care. The nose was straight and regular, the eyes keen, deep-set, black, and glowing, and his teeth equalled in beauty the ivory of his deserts. The person and proportions of the Saracen, in short, stretched on the turf near to his powerful antagonist, might have been compared to his sheeny and crescent-formed sabre, with its narrow and light, but bright and keen, Damascus blade, contrasted with the long and ponderous Gothic war-sword which was flung unbuckled on the same sod. The Emir was in the very flower of his age, and

might perhaps have been termed eminently beautiful, but for the narrowness of his forehead, and something of too much thinness and sharpness of feature, or at least what might have seemed such in a European estimate of beauty.

The manners of the Eastern warrior were grave, graceful, and decorous; indicating, however, in some particulars, the habitual restraint which men of warm and choleric tempers often set as a guard upon their native impetuosity of disposition, and at the same time a sense of his own dignity, which seemed to impose a certain formality of behaviour in him who entertained it.

This haughty feeling of superiority was perhaps equally entertained by his new European acquaintance, but the effect was different; and the same feeling which dictated to the Christian knight a bold, blunt, and somewhat careless bearing, as one too conscious of his own importance to be anxious about the opinions of others, appeared to prescribe to the Saracen a style of courtesy more studiously and formally observant of ceremony. Both were courteous; but the courtesy of the Christian seemed to flow rather from a good-humoured sense of what was due to others; that of the Moslem from a high feeling of what was to be expected from himself.

The provision which each had made for his refreshment was simple, but the meal of the Saracen was abstemious. A handful of dates, and a morsel of coarse barley-bread, sufficed to relieve the hunger of the latter, whose education had habituated him to the fare of the desert, although, since their Syrian conquests, the Arabian simplicity of life frequently gave place to the most unbounded profusion of luxury. A few draughts from the lovely fountain by which they reposed completed his meal. That of the Christian, though coarse, was more genial. Dried hog's-flesh, the abomination of the Moslemah, was the chief part of his repast; and his drink, derived from a leathern bottle, contained something better than pure element. He fed with more display of appetite, and drank with more appearance of satisfaction, than the Saracen judged it becoming to show in the performance of a mere bodily function; and, doubtless, the secret contempt which each entertained for the other, as the follower of a false religion, was considerably increased by the marked difference of their diet and manners. But each had found the weight of his opponent's arm, and the mutual respect which the bold struggle had created was sufficient to subdue other and inferior considerations. Yet the Saracen

could not help remarking the circumstances which displeased him in the Christian's conduct and manners; and, after he had witnessed for some time in silence the keen appetite which protracted the knight's banquet long after his own was concluded, he thus addressed him:

'Valiant Nazarene, is it fitting that one who can fight like a man should feed like a dog or a wolf? Even a misbelieving Jew would shudder at the food which you seem to eat with as much relish as if it were fruit from the trees of Paradise.'

'Valiant Saracen,' answered the Christian, looking up with some surprise at the accusation thus unexpectedly brought, 'know thou that I exercise my Christian freedom, in using that which is forbidden to the Jews, being, as they esteem themselves, under the bondage of the old law of Moses. We, Saracen, be it known to thee, have a better warrant for what we do. Ave Maria! be we thankful.' And, as if in defiance of his companion's scruples, he concluded a short Latin grace with a long draught from the leathern bottle.

'That, too, you call a part of your liberty,' said the Saracen; 'and as you feed like the brutes, so you degrade yourself to the bestial condition by drinking a poisonous liquor which even they refuse.'

'Know, foolish Saracen,' replied the Christian, without hesitation, 'that thou blasphemest the gifts of God, even with the blasphemy of thy father Ishmael. The juice of the grape is given to him that will use it wisely, as that which cheers the heart of man after toil, refreshes him in sickness, and comforts him in sorrow. He who so enjoyeth it may thank God for his wine-cup as for his daily bread; and he who abuseth the gift of Heaven is not a greater fool in his intoxication than thou in thine abstinence.'

The keen eye of the Saracen kindled at this sarcasm, and his hand sought the hilt of his poniard. It was but a momentary thought, however, and died away in the recollection of the powerful champion with whom he had to deal, and the desperate grapple, the impression of which still throbbed in his limbs and veins; and he contented himself with pursuing the contest in colloquy, as more convenient for the time.

'Thy words,' he said, 'O Nazarene, might create anger, did not thy ignorance raise compassion. Seest thou not, O thou more blind than any who asks alms at the door of the mosque, that the liberty thou dost boast of is restrained even in that which is dearest to man's happiness and to his

household; and that thy law, if thou dost practise it, binds thee in marriage to one single mate, be she sick or healthy, be she fruitful or barren, bring she comfort and joy or clamour and strife, to thy table and to thy bed? This, Nazarene, I do indeed call slavery; whereas, to the faithful hath the Prophet assigned upon earth the patriarchal privileges of Abraham our father and of Solomon, the wisest of mankind, having given us here a succession of beauty at our pleasure, and beyond the grave the black-eyed houris of Paradise.'

'Now, by His name that I most reverence in Heaven,' said the Christian, 'and by hers whom I most worship on earth, thou art but a blinded and a bewildered infidel. That diamond signet which thou wearest on thy finger, thou holdest it, doubtless, as of inestimable value?'

'Balsora and Bagdad cannot show the like,' replied the Saracen; 'but what avails it to our purpose?'

'Much,' replied the Frank, 'as thou shalt thyself confess. Take my war-axe and dash the stone into twenty shivers; would each fragment be as valuable as the original gem, or would they, all collected, bear the tenth part of its estimation?'

'That is a child's question,' answered the Saracen; 'the fragments of such a stone would not equal the entire jewel in the degree of hundreds to one.'

'Saracen,' replied the Christian warrior, 'the love which a true knight binds on one only, fair and faithful, is the gem entire: the affection thou flingest among thy enslaved wives and half-wedded slaves is worthless, comparatively, as the sparkling shivers of the broken diamond.'

'Now, by the Holy Caaba,' said the Emir, 'thou art a madman, who hugs his chain of iron as if it were of gold! Look more closely. This ring of mine would lose half its beauty were not the signet encircled and enchased with these lesser brilliants, which grace it and set it off. The central diamond is man, firm and entire, his value depending on himself alone; and this circle of lesser jewels are women, borrowing his lustre, which he deals out to them as best suits his pleasure or his convenience. Take the central stone from the signet, and the diamond itself remains as valuable as ever, while the lesser gems are comparatively of little value. And this is the true reading of thy parable; for what sayeth the poet Mansour: "It is the favour of man which giveth beauty and comeliness to woman, as the stream glitters no longer when the sun ceaseth to shine."'

'Saracen,' replied the Crusader, 'thou speakest like one who never saw a woman worthy the affection of a soldier. Believe me, couldst thou look upon those of Europe, to whom, after Heaven, we of the order of knighthood vow fealty and devotion, thou wouldst loathe for ever the poor sensual slaves who form thy haram. The beauty of our fair ones gives point to our spears and edge to our swords; their words are our law; and as soon will a lamp shed lustre when unkindled, as a knight distinguish himself by feats of arms, having no mistress of his affection.'

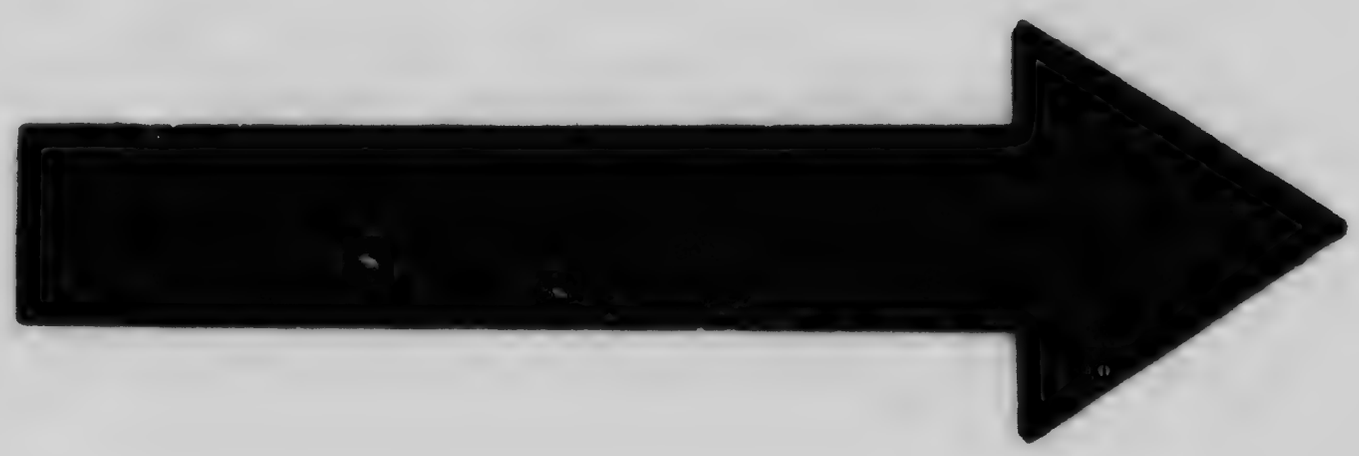
'I have heard of this frenzy among the warriors of the West,' said the Emir, 'and have ever accounted it one of the accompanying symptoms of that insanity which brings you hither to obtain possession of an empty sepulchre. But yet, methinks, so highly have the Franks whom I have met with extolled the beauty of their women, I could be well contented to behold with mine own eyes those charms which can transform such brave warriors into the tools of their pleasure.'

'Brave Saracen,' said the Knight, 'if I were not on a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre, it should be my pride to conduct you, on assurance of safety, to the camp of Richard of England, than whom none knows better how to do honour to a noble foe; and though I be poor and unattended, yet have I interest to secure for thee, or any such as thou seemest, not safety only, but respect and esteem. There shouldst thou see several of the fairest beauties of France and Britain form a ...ll circle, the brilliancy of which exceeds ten-thousandfold the lustre of mines of diamonds such as thine.'

'Now, by the corner-stone of the Caaba!' said the Saracen, 'I will accept thy invitation as freely as it is given, if thou wilt postpone thy present intent; and, credit me, brave Nazarene, it were better for thyself to turn back thy horse's head towards the camp of thy people, for to travel towards Jerusalem without a passport is but a wilful casting away of thy life.'

'I have a pass,' answered the Knight, producing a parchment, 'under Saladin's hand and signet.'

The Saracen bent his head to the dust as he recognised the seal and handwriting of the renowned soldan of Egypt and Syria; and having kissed the paper with profound respect, he pressed it to his forehead, then returned it to the Christian, saying, 'Rash Frank, thou hast sinned against thine own blood and mine, for not showing this to me when we met.'



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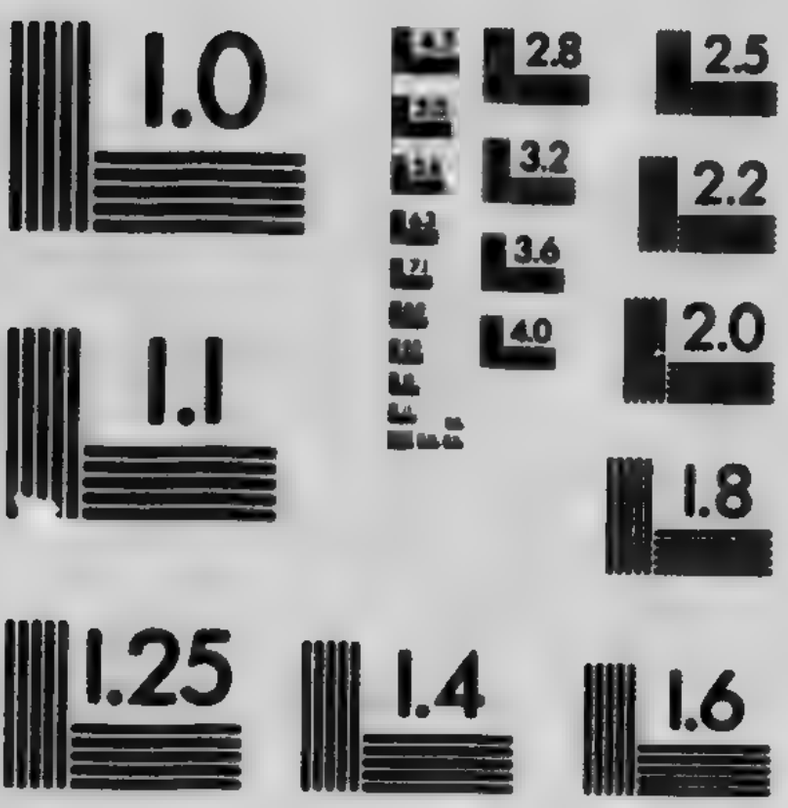

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'You came with levelled spear,' said the Knight; 'had a troop of Saracens so assailed me, it might have stood with my honour to have shown the soldan's pass, but never to one man.'

'And yet one man,' said the Saracen, haughtily, 'was enough to interrupt your journey.'

'True, brave Moslem,' replied the Christian; 'but there are few such as thou art. Such falcons fly not in flocks, or, if they do, they pounce not in numbers upon one.'

'Thou dost us but justice,' said the Saracen, evidently gratified by the compliment, as he had been touched by the implied scorn of the European's previous boast; 'from us thou shouldst have had no wrong; but well was it for me that I failed to slay thee, with the safeguard of the king of kings upon thy person. Certain it were, that the cord or the sabre had justly avenged such guilt.'

'I am glad to hear that its influence shall be availing to me,' said the Knight; 'for I have heard that the road is infested with robber tribes, who regard nothing in comparison of an opportunity of plunder.'

'The truth has been told to thee, brave Christian,' said the Saracen; 'but I swear to thee, by the turban of the Prophet, that shouldst thou miscarry in any haunt of such villains, I will myself undertake thy revenge with five thousand horse: I will slay every male of them, and send their women into such distant captivity that the name of their tribe shall never again be heard within five hundred miles of Damascus. I will sow with salt the foundations of their village, and there shall never live thing dwell there, even from that time forward.'

'I had rather the trouble which you design for yourself were in revenge of some other more important person than of me, noble Emir,' replied the Knight; 'but my vow is recorded in Heaven, for good or for evil, and I must be indebted to you for pointing me out the way to my resting-place for this evening.'

'That,' said the Saracen, 'must be under the black covering of my father's tent.'

'This night,' answered the Christian, 'I must pass in prayer and penitence with a holy man, Theodorick of Engaddi, who dwells amongst these wilds, and spends his life in the service of God.'

'I will at least see you safe thither,' said the Saracen.

'That would be pleasant convoy for me,' said the Christian,

'yet might endanger the future security of the good father; for the cruel hand of your people has been red with the blood of the servants of the Lord, and therefore do we come hither in plate and mail, with sword and lance, to open the road to the Holy Sepulchre, and protect the chosen saints and anchorites who yet dwell in this land of promise and of miracle.'

'Nazarene,' said the Moslem, 'in this the Greeks and Syrians have much belied us, seeing we do but after the word of Abubeker Alwakel, the successor of the Prophet, and, after him, the first commander of true believers. "Go forth," he said, "Yezed ben Sophian," when he sent that renowned general to take Syria from the infidels, "quit yourselves like men in battle, but slay neither the aged, the infirm, the women, nor the children. Waste not the land, neither destroy corn and fruit-trees, they are the gifts of Allah. Keep faith when you have made any covenant, even if it be to your own harm. If ye find holy men labouring with their hands, and serving God in the desert, hurt them not, neither destroy their dwellings. But when you find them with shaven crowns, they are of the synagogue of Satan — smite with the sabre, slay, cease not till they become believers or tributaries." As the Caliph, companion of the Prophet, hath told us, so have we done, and those whom our justice has smitten are but the priests of Satan. But unto the good men who, without stirring up nation against nation, worship sincerely in the faith of Issa ben Mariam, we are a shadow and a shield; and such being he whom you seek, even though the light of the Prophet hath not reached him, from me he will only have love, favour, and regard.'

'The anchorite whom I would now visit,' said the warlike pilgrim, 'is, I have heard, no priest; but were he of that anointed and sacred order, I would prove with my good lance, against paynim and infidel ——'

'Let us not defy each other, brother,' interrupted the Saracen; 'we shall find, either of us, enough of Franks or of Moslemah on whom to exercise both sword and lance. This Theodorick is protected both by Turk and Arab; and, though one of strange conditions at intervals, yet, on the whole, he bears himself so well as the follower of his own prophet, that he merits the protection of him who was sent ——'

'Now, by Our Lady, Saracen,' exclaimed the Christian, 'if thou darest name in the same breath the camel-driver of Mecca with ——'

An electrical shock of passion thrilled through the form of the Emir; but it was only momentary, and the calmness of his reply had both dignity and reason in it, when he said, 'Slander not him whom thou knowest not, the rather that we venerate the founder of thy religion, while we condemn the doctrine which your priests have spun from it. I will myself guide thee to the cavern of the hermit, which, methinks, without my help, thou wouldst find it a hard matter to reach. And, on the way, let us leave to mollahs and to monks to dispute about the divinity of our faith, and speak on themes which belong to youthful warriors — upon battles, upon beautiful women, upon sharp swords, and upon bright armour.'

CHAPTER III

THE warriors arose from their place of brief rest and simple refreshment, and courteously aided each other while they carefully replaced and adjusted the harness from which they had relieved for the time their trusty steeds. Each seemed familiar with an employment which at that time was a part of necessary, and, indeed, of indispensable, duty. Each also seemed to possess, as far as the difference betwixt the animal and rational species admitted, the confidence and affection of the horse which was the constant companion of his travels and his warfare. With the Saracen, this familiar intimacy was a part of his early habits; for, in the tents of the Eastern military tribes, the horse of the soldier ranks next to, and almost equal in importance with, his wife and his family; and, with the European warrior, circumstances, and indeed necessity, rendered his war-horse scarcely less than his brother-in-arms. The steeds, therefore, suffered themselves quietly to be taken from their food and liberty, and neighed and snuffled fondly around their masters, while they were adjusting their accoutrements for farther travel and additional toil. And each warrior, as he prosecuted his own task, or assisted with courtesy his companion, looked with observant curiosity at the equipments of his fellow-traveller, and noted particularly what struck him as peculiar in the fashion in which he arranged his riding accoutrements.

Ere they remounted to resume their journey, the Christian knight again moistened his lips and dipt his hands in the living fountain, and said to his pagan associate of the journey, 'I would I knew the name of this delicious fountain, that I might hold it in my grateful remembrance; for never did water slake more deliciously a more oppressive thirst than I have this day experienced.'

'It is called in the Arabic language,' answered the Saracen, 'by a name which signifies the Diamond of the Desert.'

'And well is it so named,' replied the Christian. 'My native valley hath a thousand springs, but not to one of them shall I attach hereafter such precious recollection as to this solitary fount, which bestows its liquid treasures where they are not only delightful, but nearly indispensable.'

'You say truth,' said the Saracen; 'for the curse is still on yonder sea of death, and neither man nor beast drink of its waves, nor of the river which feeds without filling it, until this inhospitable desert be passed.'

They mounted, and pursued their journey across the sandy waste. The ardour of noon was now past, and a light breeze somewhat alleviated the terrors of the desert, though not without bearing on its wings an impalpable dust, which the Saracen little heeded, though his heavily-armed companion felt it as such an annoyance, that he hung his iron casque at his saddle-bow, and substituted the light riding-cap, termed in the language of the time a *mortier*, from its resemblance in shape to an ordinary mortar. They rode together for some time in silence, the Saracen performing the part of director and guide of the journey, which he did by observing minute marks and bearings of the distant rocks, to a ridge of which they were gradually approaching. For a little time he seemed absorbed in the task, as a pilot when navigating a vessel through a difficult channel; but they had not proceeded half a league when he seemed secure of his route, and disposed, with more frankness than was usual to his nation, to enter into conversation.

'You have asked the name,' he said, 'of a mute fountain, which hath the semblance, but not the reality, of a living thing. Let me be pardoned to ask the name of the companion with whom I have this day encountered, both in danger and in repose, and which I cannot fancy unknown, even here among the deserts of Palestine?'

'It is not yet worth publishing,' said the Christian. 'Know, however, that among the soldiers of the Cross I am called Kenneth — Kenneth of the Couching Leopard; at home I have other titles, but they would sound harsh in an Eastern ear. Brave Saracen, let me ask which of the tribes of Arabia claims your descent, and by what name you are known.'

'Sir Kenneth,' said the Moslem, 'I joy that your name is such as my lips can easily utter. For me, I am no Arab, yet derive my descent from a line neither less wild nor less warlike. Know, Sir Knight of the Leopard, that I am Sheerkohf, the Lion of the Mountain, and that Kurdistan, from which I

derive my descent, holds no family more noble than that of Seljook.'

'I have heard,' answered the Christian, 'that your great soldan claims his blood from the same source?'

'Thanks to the Prophet, that hath so far honoured our mountains as to send from their bosom him whose word is victory,' answered the Paynim. 'I am but as a worm before the King of Egypt and Syria, and yet in my own land something my name may avail. Stranger, with how many men didst thou come on this warfare?'

'By my faith,' said Sir Kenneth, 'with aid of friends and kinsmen, I was hardly pinched to furnish forth ten well-appointed lances, with maybe some fifty more men, archers and varlets included. Some have deserted my unlucky pennon, some have fallen in battle, several have died of disease, and one trusty armour-bearer, for whose life I am now doing my pilgrimage, lies on the bed of sickness.'

'Christian,' said Sheerkohf, 'here I have five arrows in my quiver, each feathered from the wing of an eagle. When I send one of them to my tents, a thousand warriors mount on horseback; when I send another, an equal force will arise: for the five, I can command five thousand men; and if I send my bow, ten thousand mounted riders will shake the desert. And with thy fifty followers thou hast come to invade a land in which I am one of the meanest!'

'Now, by the rood, Saracen,' retorted the Western warrior, 'thou shouldst know, ere thou vauntest thyself, that one steel glove can crush a whole handful of hornets.'

'Ay, but it must first inclose them within its grasp,' said the Saracen, with a smile which might have endangered their new alliance, had he not changed the subject by adding, 'And is bravery so much esteemed amongst the Christian princes, that thou, thus void of means and of men, canst offer, as thou didst of late, to be my protector and security in the camp of thy brethren?'

'Know, Saracen,' said the Christian, 'since such is thy style, that the name of a knight, and the blood of a gentleman, entitle him to place himself on the same rank with sovereigns even of the first degree, in so far as regards all but regal authority and dominion. Were Richard of England himself to wound the honour of a knight as poor as I am, he could not, by the law of chivalry, deny him the combat.'

'Methinks I should like to look upon so strange a scene,'

said the Emir, 'in which a leathern belt and a pair of spurs put the poorest on a level with the most powerful.'

'You must add free blood and a fearless heart,' said the Christian; 'then, perhaps, you will not have spoken untruly of the dignity of knighthood.'

'And mix you as boldly amongst the females of your chiefs and leaders?' asked the Saracen.

'God forbid,' said the Knight of the Leopard, 'that the poorest knight in Christendom should not be free, in all honourable service, to devote his hand and sword, the fame of his actions, and the fixed devotion of his heart, to the fairest princess who ever wore coronet on her brow!'

'But a little while since,' said the Saracen, 'and you described love as the highest treasure of the heart — thine hath undoubtedly been high and nobly bestowed?'

'Stranger,' answered the Christian, blushing deeply as he spoke, 'we tell not rashly where it is we have bestowed our choicest treasures; it is enough for thee to know that, as thou sayest, my love is highly and nobly bestowed — most highly, most nobly; but if thou wouldst hear of love and broken lances, venture thyself, as thou sayest, to the camp of the Crusaders, and thou wilt find exercise for thine ears, and, if thou wilt, for thy hands too.'

The Eastern warrior, raising himself in his stirrups and shaking aloft his lance, replied, 'Hardly, I fear, shall I find one with a crossed shoulder who will exchange with me the cast of the jerrid.'

'I will not promise for that,' replied the Knight, 'though there be in the camp certain Spaniards, who have right good skill in your Eastern game of hurling the javelin.'

'Dogs and sons of dogs!' ejaculated the Saracen; 'have these Spaniards to do to come hither to combat believers, who, in their own land, are their lords and masters? With them I would mix in no warlike p[illegible]

'Let not the knights of Leon or Asturias hear you speak thus of them,' said the Knight of the Leopard; 'but,' added he, smiling at the recollection of the morning's combat, 'if, instead of a reed, you were inclined to stand the cast of a battle-axe, there are enough of Western warriors who would gratify your longing.'

'By the beard of my father, sir,' said the Saracen, with an approach to laughter, 'the game is too rough for mere sport; I will never shun them in battle, but my head (pressing his

hand to his brow) will not, for a while, permit me to seek them in sport.'

'I would you saw the axe of King Richard,' answered the Western warrior, 'to which that which hangs at my saddle-bow weighs but as a feather.'

'We hear much of that island sovereign,' said the Saracen, 'art thou one of his subjects?'

'One of his followers I am, for this expedition,' answered the Knight, 'and honoured in the service; but not born his subject, although a native of the island in which he reigns.'

'How mean you?' said the Eastern soldier; 'have you then two kings in one poor island?'

'As thou sayest,' said the Scot, for such was Sir Kenneth by birth — 'it is even so; and yet, although the inhabitants of the two extremities of that island are engaged in frequent war, the country can, as thou seest, furnish forth such a body of men-at-arms as may go far to shake the unholy hold which your master hath laid on the cities of Zion.'

'By the beard of Saladin, Nazarene, but that it is a thoughtless and boyish folly, I could laugh at the simplicity of your great sultan, who comes hither to make conquests of deserts and rocks, and dispute the possession of them with those who have tenfold numbers at command, while he leaves a part of his narrow islet, in which he was born a sovereign, to the dominion of another sceptre than his. Surely, Sir Kenneth, you and the other good men of your country should have submitted yourselves to the dominion of this King Richard, ere you left your native land, divided against itself, to set forth on this expedition?'

Hasty and fierce was Kenneth's answer. 'No, by the bright light of Heaven! If the King of England had not set forth to the Crusade till he was sovereign of Scotland, the crescent might, for me, and all true-hearted Scots, glimmer for ever on the walls of Zion.'

Thus far he had proceeded, when, suddenly recollecting himself, he muttered, '*Mea culpa — mea culpa!* what have I, a soldier of the Cross, to do with recollection of war betwixt Christian nations?'

The rapid expression of feeling corrected by the dictates of duty did not escape the Moslem, who, if he did not entirely understand all which it conveyed, saw enough to convince him with the assurance that Christians, as well as Moslemah, had private feelings of personal pique and national quarrels which

were not entirely reconcilable. But the Saracens were a race polished, perhaps, to the utmost extent which their religion permitted, and particularly capable of entertaining high ideas of courtesy and politeness; and such sentiments prevented his taking any notice of the inconsistency of Sir Kenneth's feelings, in the opposite characters of a Scot and a Crusader.

Meanwhile, as they advanced, the scene began to change around them. They were now turning to the eastward, and had reached the range of steep and barren hills which binds in that quarter the naked plain, and varies the surface of the country, without changing its sterile character. Sharp, rocky eminences began to arise around them, and, in a short time, deep declivities, and ascents, both formidable in height and difficult from the narrowness of the path, offered to the travellers obstacles of a different kind from those with which they had recently contended. Dark caverns and chasms amongst the rocks, those grottoes so often alluded to in Scripture, yawned fearfully on either side as they proceeded, and the Scottish knight was informed by the Emir that these were often the refuge of beasts of prey, or of men still more ferocious, who, driven to desperation by the constant war, and the oppression exercised by the soldiery, as well of the Cross as of the Crescent, had become robbers, and spared neither rank nor religion, neither sex nor age, in their depredations.

The Scottish knight listened with indifference to the accounts of ravages committed by wild beasts or wicked men, secure as he felt himself in his own valour and personal strength; but he was struck with mysterious dread when he recollected that he was now in the awful wilderness of the forty days' fast, and the scene of the actual personal temptation, wherewith the Evil Principle was permitted to assail the Son of Man. He withdrew his attention gradually from the light and worldly conversation of the infidel warrior beside him, and, however acceptable his gay and gallant bravery would have rendered him as a companion elsewhere, Sir Kenneth felt as if, in those wildernesses — the waste and dry places, in which the foul spirits were wont to wander when expelled the mortals whose forms they possessed — a bare-footed friar would have been a better associate than the gay but unbelieving paynim.

These feelings embarrassed him, the rather that the Saracen's spirits appeared to rise with the journey, and because the farther he penetrated into the gloomy recesses of the mountains, the lighter became his conversation, and when he found that

unanswered, the louder grew his song. Sir Kenneth knew enough of the Eastern languages to be assured that he chanted sonnets of love, containing all the glowing praises of beauty in which the Oriental poets are so fond of luxuriating, and which, therefore, were peculiarly unfitted for a serious or devotional strain of thought, the feeling best becoming the Wilderness of the Temptation. With inconsistency enough, the Saracen also sung lays in praise of wine, the liquid ruby of the Persian poets, and his gaiety at length became so unsuitable to the Christian knight's contrary train of sentiments, as, but for the promise of amity which they had exchanged, would most likely have made Sir Kenneth take measures to change his note. As it was, the Crusader felt as if he had by his side some gay licentious fiend, who endeavoured to ensnare his soul, and endanger his immortal salvation, by inspiring loose thoughts of earthly pleasure, and thus polluting his devotion, at a time when his faith as a Christian and his vow as a pilgrim called on him for a serious and penitential state of mind. He was thus greatly perplexed, and undecided how to act; and it was in a tone of hasty displeasure that, at length breaking silence, he interrupted the lay of the celebrated Rudpiki, in which he prefers the mole on his mistress's bosom to all the wealth of Bokhara and Samarcand.

'Saracen,' said the Crusader, sternly, 'blinded as thou art, and plunged amidst the errors of a false law, thou shouldst yet comprehend that there are some places more holy than others, and that there are some scenes also in which the Evil One hath more than ordinary power over sinful mortals. I will not tell thee for what awful reason this place — these rocks, these caverns with their gloomy arches, leading as it were to the central abyss — are held an especial haunt of Satan and his angels. It is enough, that I have been long warned to beware of this place by wise and holy men, to whom the qualities of the unholy region are well known. Wherefore, Saracen, forbear thy foolish and ill-timed levity, and turn thy thoughts to things more suited to the spot; although, alas for thee! thy best prayers are but as blasphemy and sin.'

The Saracen listened with some surprise, and then replied, with good-humour and gaiety, only so far repressed as courtesy required, 'Good Sir Kenneth, methinks you deal unequally by your companion, or else ceremony is but indifferently taught amongst your Western tribes. I took no offence when I saw you gorge hog's flesh and drink wine, and permitted you to

enjoy a treat which you called your Christian liberty, only pitying in my heart your foul pastimes. Wherefore, then, shouldst thou take scandal because I cheer, to the best of my power, a gloomy road with a cheerful verse? What saith the poet — "Song is like the dews of Heaven on the bosom of the desert: it cools the path of the traveller."'

'Friend Saracen,' said the Christian, 'I blame not the love of minstrelsy and of the *gaie science*; albeit we yield unto it even too much room in our thoughts, when they should be bent on better things. But prayers and holy psalms are better fitting than "lais" of love, or of wine-cups, when men walk in this Valley of the Shadow of Death, full of fiends and demons, whom the prayers of holy men have driven forth from the haunts of humanity to wander amidst scenes as accursed as themselves.'

'Speak not thus of the genii, Christian,' answered the Saracen, 'for know, thou speakest to one whose line and nation drew their origin from the immortal race which your sect fear and blaspheme.'

'I well thought,' answered the Crusader, 'that your blinded race had their descent from the foul fiend, without whose aid you would never have been able to maintain this blessed land of Palestine against so many valiant soldiers of God. I speak not thus of thee in particular, Saracen, but generally of thy people and religion. Strange is it to me, however, not that you should have the descent from the Evil One, but that you should boast of it.'

From whom should the bravest boast of descending, saving from him that is bravest?' said the Saracen; 'from whom should the proudest trace their line so well as from the Dark Spirit which would rather fall headlong by force than bend the knee by his will? Eblis may be hated, stranger, but he must be feared; and such as Eblis are his descendants of Kurdistan.'

Tales of magic and of necromancy were the learning of the period, and Sir Kenneth heard his companion's confession of diabolical descent without any disbelief, and without much wonder; yet not without a secret shudder at finding himself in this fearful place, in the company of one who avouched himself to belong to such a lineage. Naturally unsusceptible, however, of fear, he crossed himself, and stoutly demanded of the Saracen an account of the pedigree which he had boasted. The latter readily complied.

'Know, brave stranger,' he said, 'that when the cruel Zohauk,

one of the descendants of Giamschid,[1] held the throne of Persia, he formed a league with the Powers of Darkness, amidst the secret vaults of Istakhar — vaults which the hands of the elementary spirits had hewn out of the living rock, long before Adam himself had an existence. Here he fed, with daily oblations of human blood, two devouring serpents, which had become, according to the poets, a part of himself, and to sustain whom he levied a tax of daily human sacrifices, till the exhausted patience of his subjects caused some to raise up the scimitar of resistance, like the valiant Blacksmith and the victorious Feridoun, by whom the tyrant was at length dethroned, and imprisoned for ever in the dismal caverns of the mountain Damavend. But ere that deliverance had taken place, and whilst the power of the bloodthirsty tyrant was at its height, the band of ravening slaves whom he had sent forth to prey victims for his daily sacrifice brought to the vaults of the palace of Istakhar seven sisters so beautiful that they seemed seven houris. These seven maidens were the daughters of a sage, who had no treasures save those beauties and his own wisdom. The last was not sufficient to foresee this misfortune, the former seemed ineffectual to prevent it. The eldest exceeded not her twentieth year, the youngest had scarce attained her thirteenth; and so like were they to each other, that they could not have been distinguished but for the difference of height, in which they gradually rose in easy gradation above each other, like the ascent which leads to the gates of Paradise. So lovely were these seven sisters when they stood in the darksome vault, disrobed of all clothing saving a cymar of white silk, that their charms moved the hearts of those who were not mortal. Thunder muttered, the earth shook, the wall of the vault was rent, and at the chasm entered one dressed like a hunter, with bow and shafts, and followed by six others, his brethren. They were tall men, and though dark yet comely to behold, but their eyes had more the glare of those of the dead than the light which lives under the eyelids of the living. "Zeineb," said the leader of the band and as he spoke he took the eldest sister by the hand, and his voice was soft, low, and melancholy, "I am Cothrob, king of the subterranean world, and supreme chief of Ginnistan. I and my brethren are of those who, created out of the pure elementary fire, disdained, even at the command of Omnipotence, to do homage to a clod of earth, because it was called man. Thou mayst have heard of us as

[1] See Note 3.

cruel, unrelenting, and persecuting. It is false. We are by nature kind and generous; only vengeful when insulted, only cruel when affronted. We are true to those who trust us; and we have heard the invocations of thy father, the sage Mithrasp, who wisely worships not alone the Origin of Good, but that which is called the Source of Evil. You and your sisters are on the eve of death; but let each give to us one hair from your fair tresses, in token of fealty, and we will carry you many miles from hence to a place of safety, where you may bid defiance to Zohauk and his ministers." The fear of instant death, saith the poet, is like the rod of the prophet Haroun, which devoured all other rods, when transformed into snakes before the King of Pharaoh; and the daughters of the Persian sage were less apt than others to be afraid of the addresses of a spirit. They gave the tribute which Cothrob demanded, and in an instant the sisters were transported to an enchanted castle on the mountains of Tugrut, in Kurdistan, and were never again seen by mortal eye. But in process of time seven youths, distinguished in the war and in the chase, appeared in the environs of the castle of the demons. They were darker, taller, fiercer, and more resolute than any of the scattered inhabitants of the valleys of Kurdistan; and they took to themselves wives, and became fathers of the seven tribes of the Kurdmans, whose valour is known throughout the universe.'

The Christian knight heard with wonder the wild tale, of which Kurdistan still possesses the traces, and, after a moment's thought, replied, 'Verily, sir knight, you have spoken well: your genealogy may be dreaded and hated, but it cannot be contemned. Neither do I any longer wonder at your obstinacy in a false faith; since, doubtless, it is part of the fiendish disposition which hath descended from your ancestors, those infernal huntsmen, as you have described them, to love falsehood rather than truth; and I no longer marvel that your spirits become high and exalted, and vent themselves in verse and in tunes, when you approach to the places encumbered by the haunting of evil spirits, which must excite in you that joyous feeling which others experience when approaching the land of their human ancestry.'

'By my father's beard, I think thou hast the right,' said the Saracen, rather amused than offended by the freedom with which the Christian had uttered his reflections; 'for, though the Prophet — blessed be his name! — hath sown amongst us the seed of a better faith than our ancestors learned in the ghostly

halls of Tugrut, yet we are not willing, like other Moslemah, to pass hasty doom on the lofty and powerful elementary spirits from whom we claim our origin. These genii, according to our belief and hope, are not altogether reprobate, but are still in the way of probation, and may hereafter be punished or rewarded. Leave we this to the mollahs and the imaums. Enough that with us the reverence for these spirits is not altogether effaced by what we have learned from the Koran and that many of us still sing, in memorial of our fathers more ancient faith, such verses as these.' So saying, he proceeded to chant verses, very ancient in the language and structure, which some have thought derive their source from the worshippers of Arimanes, the Evil Principle.

AHRIMAN

Dark Ahriman, whom Irak still
Holds origin of woe and ill,
  When, bending at thy shrine,
We view the world with troubled eye,
Where see we 'neath the extended sky,
  An empire matching thine?

If the Benigner Power can yield
A fountain in the desert field,
  Where weary pilgrims drink;
Thine are the waves that lash the rock,
Thine the tornado's deadly shock,
  Where countless navies sink.

Or if He bid the soil dispense
Balsams to cheer the sinking sense,
  How few can they deliver
From lingering pains, or pang intense
Red fever, spotted pestilence,
  The arrows of thy quiver?

Chief in man's bosom sits thy sway,
And frequent, while in words we pray
  Before another throne,
Whate'er of specious form be there,
The secret meaning of the prayer
  Is, Ahriman, thine own.

Say, hast thou feeling, sense, and form,
Thunder thy voice, thy garments storm,
  As Eastern magi say;
With sentient soul of hate and wrath,
And wings to sweep thy deadly path,
  And fangs to tear thy prey?

Or art thou mix'd in Nature's source,
An ever-operating force,
  Converting good to ill;
An evil principle innate,
Contending with our better fate,
  And oh! victorious still?

Howe'er it be, dispute is vain.
On all without thou hold'st thy reign,
  Nor less on all within;
Each mortal passion's fierce career,
Love, hate, ambition, joy, and fear,
  Thou goadest into sin.

Whene'er a sunny gleam appears,
To brighten up our vale of tears,
  Thou art not distant far;
'Mid such brief solace of our lives,
Thou whett'st our very banquet-knives
  To tools of death and war.

Thus, from the moment of our birth,
Long as we linger on the earth,
  Thou rulest the fate of men;
Thine are the pangs of life's last hour,
And — who dare answer? — is thy power,
  Dark Spirit! ended THEN?[1]

These verses may perhaps have been the not unnatural effusion of some half-enlightened philosopher, who, in the fabled deity, Arimanes, saw but the prevalence of moral and physical evil; but in the ears of Sir Kenneth of the Leopard they had a different effect, and, sung as they were by one who had just boasted himself a descendant of demons, sounded very like an address of worship to the Arch-fiend himself. He weighed within himself whether, on hearing such blasphemy in the very desert where Satan had stood rebuked for demanding homage, taking an abrupt leave of the Saracen was sufficient to testify his abhorrence; or whether he was not rather constrained by his vow as a Crusader to defy the infidel to combat on the spot, and leave him food for the beasts of the wilderness, when his attention was suddenly caught by an unexpected apparition.

The light was now verging low, yet served the Knight still to discern that they two were no longer alone in the forest, but were closely watched by a figure of great height and very thin, which skipped over rocks and bushes with so much agility as, added to the wild and hirsute appearance of the individual,

[1] See Hymn to Ahriman. Note 4.

reminded him of the fauns and silvans whose images he had seen in the ancient temples of Rome. As the single-hearted Scotchman had never for a moment doubted these gods of the ancient Gentiles to be actually devils, so he now hesitated not to believe that the blasphemous hymn of the Saracen had raised up an infernal spirit.

'But what recks it?' said stout Sir Kenneth to himself; 'down with the fiend and his worshippers!'

He did not, however, think it necessary to give the same warning of defiance to two enemies as he would unquestionably have afforded to one. His hand was upon his mace, and perhaps the unwary Saracen would have been paid for his Persian poetry by having his brains dashed out on the spot, without any reason assigned for it; but the Scottish knight was spared from committing what would have been a sore blot in his shield of arms. The apparition, on which his eyes had been fixed for some time, had at first appeared to dog their path by concealing itself behind rocks and shrubs, using those advantages of the ground with great address, and surmounting its irregularities with surprising agility. At length, just as the Saracen paused in his song, the figure, which was that of a tall man clothed in goat-skins, sprung into the midst of the path, and seized a rein of the Saracen's bridle in either hand, confronting thus and bearing back the noble horse, which, unable to endure the manner in which this sudden assailant pressed the long-armed bit and the severe curb, which, according to the Eastern fashion, was a solid ring of iron, reared upright, and finally fell backwards on his master, who, however, avoided the peril of the fall by lightly throwing himself to one side.

The assailant then shifted his grasp from the bridle of the horse to the throat of the rider, flung himself above the struggling Saracen, and, despite of his youth and activity, kept him undermost, wreathing his long arms above those of his prisoner, who called out angrily, and yet half-laughing at the same time — 'Hamako — fool — unloose me — this passes thy privilege — unloose me, or I will use my dagger.'

'Thy dagger, infidel dog!' said the figure in the goat-skins, 'hold it in thy gripe if thou canst!' and in an instant he wrenched the Saracen's weapon out of its owner's hand and brandished it over his head.

'Help, Nazarene!' cried Sheerkohf, now seriously alarmed - 'help, or the Hamako will slay me.'

'Slay thee!' replied the dweller of the desert; 'and well

hast thou merited death, for singing thy blasphemous hymns, not only to the praise of thy false prophet, who is the foul fiend's harbinger, but to that of the Author of Evil himself.'

The Christian knight had hitherto looked on as one stupified, so strangely had this rencontre contradicted, in its progress and event, all that he had previously conjectured. He felt, however, at length, that it touched his honour to interfere in behalf of his discomfited companion; and therefore addressed himself to the victorious figure in the goat-skins.

'Whosoe'er thou art,' he said, 'and whether of good or of evil, know that I am sworn for the time to be true companion to the Saracen whom thou holdest under thee; therefore, I pray thee to let him arise, else I will do battle with thee in his behalf.'

'And a proper quarrel it were,' answered the Hamako, 'for a Crusader to do battle in — for the sake of an unbaptized dog to combat one of his own holy faith! Art thou come forth to the wilderness to fight for the Crescent against the Cross? A goodly soldier of God art thou, to listen to those who sing the praises of Satan!'

Yet, while he spoke thus, he arose himself, and, suffering the Saracen to arise also, returned him his cangiar or poniard.

'Thou seest to what a point of peril thy presumption hath brought thee,' continued he of the goat-skins, now addressing Sheerkohf, 'and by what weak means thy practised skill and boasted agility can be foiled, when such is Heaven's pleasure. Wherefore, beware, O Ilderim! for know that, were there not a twinkle in the star of thy nativity which promises for thee something that is good and gracious in Heaven's good time, we two had not parted till I had torn asunder the throat which so lately trilled forth blasphemies.'

'Hamako,' said the Saracen, without any appearance of resenting the violent language, and yet more violent assault, to which he had been subjected — 'I pray thee, good Hamako, to beware how thou dost again urge thy privilege over far; for though, as a good Moslem, I respect those whom Heaven hath deprived of ordinary reason, in order to endow them with the spirit of prophecy, yet I like not other men's hands on the bridle of my horse, neither upon my own person. Speak, therefore, what thou wilt, secure of any resentment from me; but gather so much sense as to apprehend that, if thou shalt again proffer me any violence, I will strike thy shagged head from thy meagre shoulders. And to thee, friend Kenneth,' he

added, as he remounted his steed, 'I must needs say that, in a companion through the desert, I love friendly deeds better than fair words. Of the last thou hast given me enough; but it had been better to have aided me more speedily in my struggle with this Hamako, who had wellnigh taken my life in his frenzy.'

'By my faith,' said the Knight, 'I did somewhat fail — was somewhat tardy in rendering thee instant help; but the strangeness of the assailant, the suddenness of the scene — it was as if thy wild and wicked lay had raised the devil among us, and such was my confusion, that two or three minutes elapsed ere I could take to my weapon.'

'Thou art but a cold and considerate friend,' said the Saracen; 'and, had the Hamako been one grain more frantic, thy companion had been slain by thy side, to thy eternal dishonour, without thy stirring a finger in his aid, although thou satest by, mounted and in arms.'

'By my word, Saracen,' said the Christian, 'if thou wilt have it in plain terms, I thought that strange figure was the devil; and being of thy lineage, I knew not what family secret you might be communicating to each other, as you lay lovingly rolling together on the sand.'

'Thy gibe is no answer, brother Kenneth,' said the Saracen; 'for know that, had my assailant been in very deed the Prince of Darkness, thou wert bound not the less to enter into combat with him in thy comrade's behalf. Know, also, that whatever there may be of foul or of fiendish about the Hamako belongs more to your lineage than to mine, this Hamako being, in truth, the anchorite whom thou art come hither to visit.'

'This!' said Sir Kenneth, looking at the athletic yet wasted figure before him — 'this? Thou mockest, Saracen: this cannot be the venerable Theodorick!'

'Ask himself, if thou wilt not believe me,' answered Sheerkohf; and ere the words had left his mouth the hermit gave evidence in his own behalf.

'I am Theodorick of Engaddi,' he said — 'I am the walker of the desert — I am friend of the cross, and flail of all infidels, heretics, and devil-worshippers. Avoid ye — avoid ye! Down with Mahound, Termagaunt, and all their adherents!' So saying, he pulled from under his shaggy garment a sort of [illegible] or jointed club, bound with iron, which he brandished [illegible] his head with singular dexterity.

'Thou seest thy saint,' said the Saracen, laughing, for the

first time, at the unmitigated astonishment with which Sir Kenneth looked on the wild gestures and heard the wayward muttering of Theodorick, who, after swinging his flail in every direction, apparently quite reckless whether it encountered the head of either of his companions, finally showed his own strength and the soundness of the weapon by striking into fragments a large stone which lay near him.

'This is a madman,' said Sir Kenneth.

'Not the worse saint,' returned the Moslem, speaking according to the well-known Eastern belief that madmen are under the influence of immediate inspiration. 'Know, Christian, that when one eye is extinguished the other becomes more keen, when one hand is cut off the other becomes more powerful; so, when our reason in human things is disturbed or destroyed, our view heavenward becomes more acute and perfect.'

Here the voice of the Saracen was drowned in that of the hermit, who began to halloo aloud in a wild chanting tone — 'I am Theodorick of Engaddi — I am the torch-brand of the desert — I am the flail of the infidels. The lion and the leopard shall be my comrades, and draw nigh to my cell for shelter, neither shall the goat be afraid of their fangs. I am the torch and the lantern. *Kyrie eleison!*'

He closed his song by a short race, and ended that again by three forward bounds, which would have done him great credit in a gymnastic academy, but became his character of hermit so indifferently, that the Scottish knight was altogether confounded and bewildered.

The Saracen seemed to understand him better. 'You see,' he said, 'that he expects us to follow him to his cell, which, indeed, is our only place of refuge for the night. You are the leopard, from the portrait on your shield; I am the lion, as my name imports; and, by the goat, alluding to his garb of goat-skins, he means himself. We must keep him in sight, however, for he is as fleet as a dromedary.'

In fact, the task was a difficult one, for though the reverend guide stopped from time to time and waved his hand, as if to encourage them to come on, yet, well acquainted with all the winding dells and passes of the desert, and gifted with uncommon activity, which, perhaps, an unsettled state of mind kept in constant exercise, he led the knights through chasms and along footpaths where even the light-armed Saracen, with his well-trained barb, was in considerable risk, and where the iron-

sheathed European and his overburdened horse found themselves in such imminent peril as the rider would gladly have exchanged for the dangers of a general action. Glad he was when, at length, after this wild race he beheld the holy man who had led it standing in front of a cavern, with a large torch in his hand, composed of a piece of wood dipt in bitumen, which cast a broad and flickering light, and emitted a strong sulphureous smell.

Undeterred by the stifling vapour, the Knight threw himself from his horse and entered the cavern, which afforded small appearance of accommodation. The cell was divided into two parts, in the outward of which were an altar of stone and a crucifix made of reeds: this served the anchorite for his chapel. On one side of this outward cave the Christian knight, though not without scruple, arising from religious reverence to the objects around, fastened up his horse and arranged him for the night, in imitation of the Saracen, who gave him to understand that such was the custom of the place. The hermit, meanwhile, was busied putting his inner apartment in order to receive his guests, and there they soon joined him. At the bottom of the outer cave, a small aperture, closed with a door of rough plank, led into the sleeping-apartment of the hermit, which was more commodious. The floor had been brought to a rough level by the labour of the inhabitant, and then strewed with white sand, which he daily sprinkled with water from a small fountain which bubbled out of the rock in one corner, affording, in that stifling climate, refreshment alike to the ear and the taste. Mattrasses, wrought of twisted flags, lay by the side of the cell; the sides, like the floor, had been roughly brought to shape, and several herbs and flowers were hung around them. Two waxen torches, which the hermit lighted, gave a cheerful air to the place, which was rendered agreeable by its fragrance and coolness.

There were implements of labour in one corner of the apartment, in the other was a niche for a rude statue of the Virgin. A table and two chairs showed that they must be the handiwork of the anchorite, being different in their form from Oriental accommodations. The former was covered, not only with reeds and pulse, but also with dried flesh, which Theodorick assiduously placed in such arrangement as should invite the appetite of his guests. This appearance of courtesy, though mute, and expressed by gesture only, seemed to Sir Kenneth something entirely irreconcilable with his former wild and violent demeanour. The movements of the hermit were now

become composed, and apparently it was only a sense of religious humiliation which prevented his features, emaciated as they were by his austere mode of life, from being majestic and noble. He trode his cell as one who seemed born to rule over men, but who had abdicated his empire to become the servant of Heaven. Still, it must be allowed that his gigantic size, the length of his unshaven locks and beard, and the fire of a deep-set and wild eye were rather attributes of a soldier than of a recluse.

Even the Saracen seemed to regard the anchorite with some veneration while he was thus employed, and he whispered in a low tone to Sir Kenneth, 'The Hamako is now in his better mind; but he will not speak until we have eaten — such is his vow.'

It was in silence, accordingly, th. , Theodorick motioned to the Scot to take his place on one of the low chairs, while Sheerkohf placed himself, after the custom of his nation, upon a cushion of mats. The hermit then held up both hands, as if blessing the refreshment which he had placed before his guests, and they proceeded to eat in silence as profound as his own. To the Saracen this gravity was natural, and the Christian imitated his taciturnity, while he employed his thoughts on the singularity of his own situation, and the contrast betwixt the wild, furious gesticulations, loud cries, and fierce actions of Theodorick, when they first met him, and the demure, solemn, decorous assiduity with which he now performed the duties of hospitality.

When their meal was ended, the hermit, who had not himself eaten a morsel, removed the fragments from the table, and placing before the Saracen a pitcher of sherbet, assigned to the Scot a flask of wine.

'Drink,' he said, 'my children,' they were the first words he had spoken; 'the gifts of God are to be enjoyed, when the Giver is remembered.'

Having said this, he retired to the outward cell, probably for performance of his devotions, and left his guests together in the inner apartment; when Sir Kenneth endeavoured, by various questions, to draw from Sheerkohf what that Emir knew concerning his host. He was interested by more than mere curiosity in these inquiries. Difficult as it was to reconcile the outrageous demeanour of the recluse at his first appearance to his present humble and placid behaviour, it seemed yet more impossible to think it consistent with the high con-

sideration in which, according to what Sir Kenneth had learned, this hermit was held by the most enlightened divines of the Christian world. Theodorick, the hermit of Engaddi, had, in that character, been the correspondent of popes and councils; to whom his letters full of eloquent fervour, had described the miseries imposed by the unbelievers upon the Latin Christians in the Holy Land, in colours scarce inferior to those employed at the Council of Clermont by the Hermit Peter, when he preached the first Crusade. To find, in a person so reverend and so much revered, the frantic gestures of a mad fakir, induced the Christian knight to pause ere he could resolve to communicate to him certain important matters which he had in charge from some of the leaders of the Crusade.

It had been a main object of Sir Kenneth's pilgrimage, attempted by a route so unusual, to make such communications; but what he had that night seen induced him to pause and reflect ere he proceeded to the execution of his commission. From the Emir he could not extract much information, but the general tenor was as follows: — That, as he had heard, the hermit had been once a brave and valiant soldier, wise in council and fortunate in battle, which last he could easily believe from the great strength and agility which he had often seen him display; that he had appeared at Jerusalem in the character not of a pilgrim, but in that of one who had devoted himself to dwell for the remainder of his life in the Holy Land. Shortly afterwards, he fixed his residence amid the scenes of desolation where they now found him, respected by the Latins for his austere devotion, and by the Turks and Arabs on account of the symptoms of insanity which he displayed, and which they ascribed to inspiration. It was from them he had the name of Hamako, which expresses such a character in the Turkish language. Sheerkohf himself seemed at a loss how to rank their host. He had been, he said, a wise man, and could often for many hours together speak lessons of virtue or wisdom, without the slightest appearance of inaccuracy. At other times he was wild and violent, but never before had he seen him so mischievously disposed as he had that day appeared to be. His rage was chiefly provoked by any affront to his religion; and there was a story of some wandering Arabs who had insulted his worship and defaced his altar, and whom he had on that account attacked and slain with the short flail, which he carried with him in lieu of all other weapons. This incident had made a great noise, and it was as much the fear of the

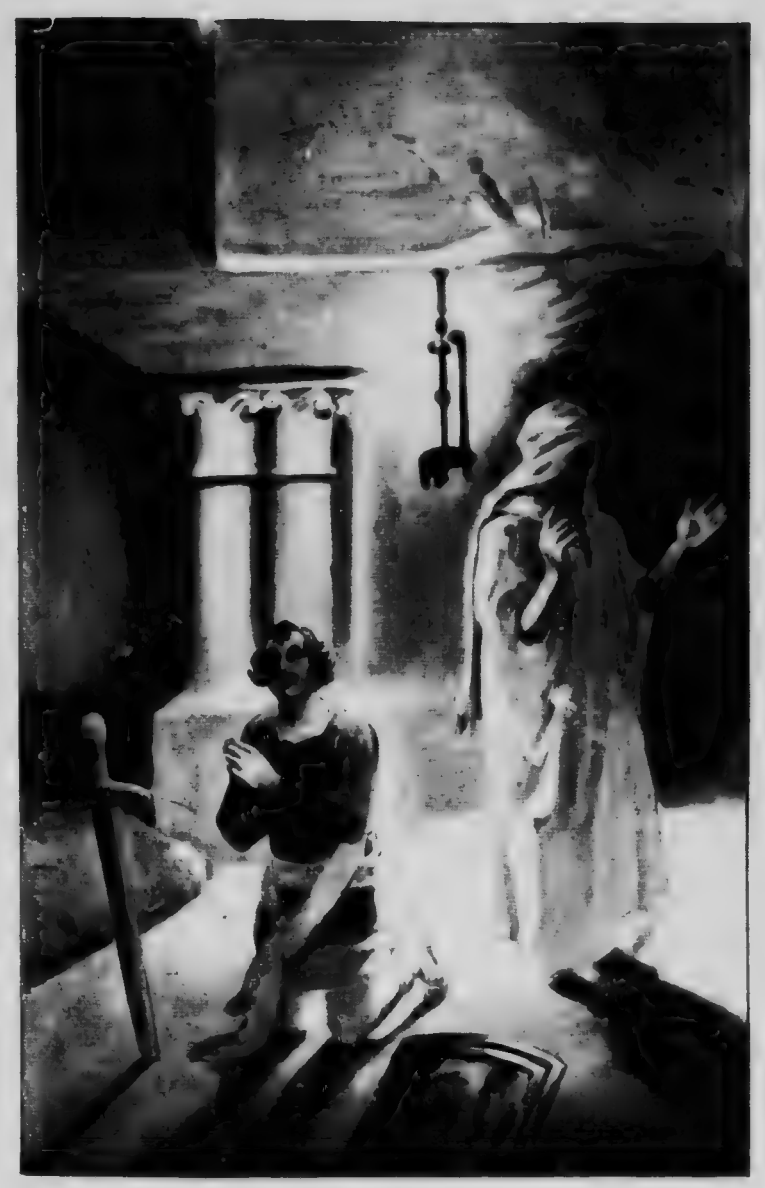
hermit's iron flail as regard for his character as a hamako which caused the roving tribes to respect his dwelling and his chapel. His fame had spread so far, that Saladin had issued particular orders that he should be spared and protected. He himself, and other Moslem lords of rank, had visited the cell more than once, partly from curiosity, partly that they expected from a man so learned as the Christian hamako some insight into the secrets of futurity. 'He had,' continued the Saracen, 'a *rashid*, or observatory, of great height, contrived to view the heavenly bodies, and particularly the planetary system; by whose movements and influences, as both Christian and Moslem believed, the course of human events was regulated, and might be predicted.'

This was the substance of the Emir Sheerkohf's information, and it left Sir Kenneth in doubt whether the character of insanity arose from the occasional excessive fervour of the hermit's zeal, or whether it was not altogether fictitious, and assumed for the sake of the immunities which it afforded. Yet it seemed that the infidels had carried their complaisance towards him to an uncommon length, considering the fanaticism of the followers of Mohammed, in the midst of whom he was living, though the professed enemy of their faith. He thought also there was more intimacy of acquaintance betwixt the hermit and the Saracen than the words of the latter had induced him to anticipate; and it had not escaped him that the former had called the latter by a name different from that which he himself had assumed. All these considerations authorised caution, if not suspicion. He determined to observe his host closely, and not to be over-hasty in communicating with him on the important charge entrusted to him.

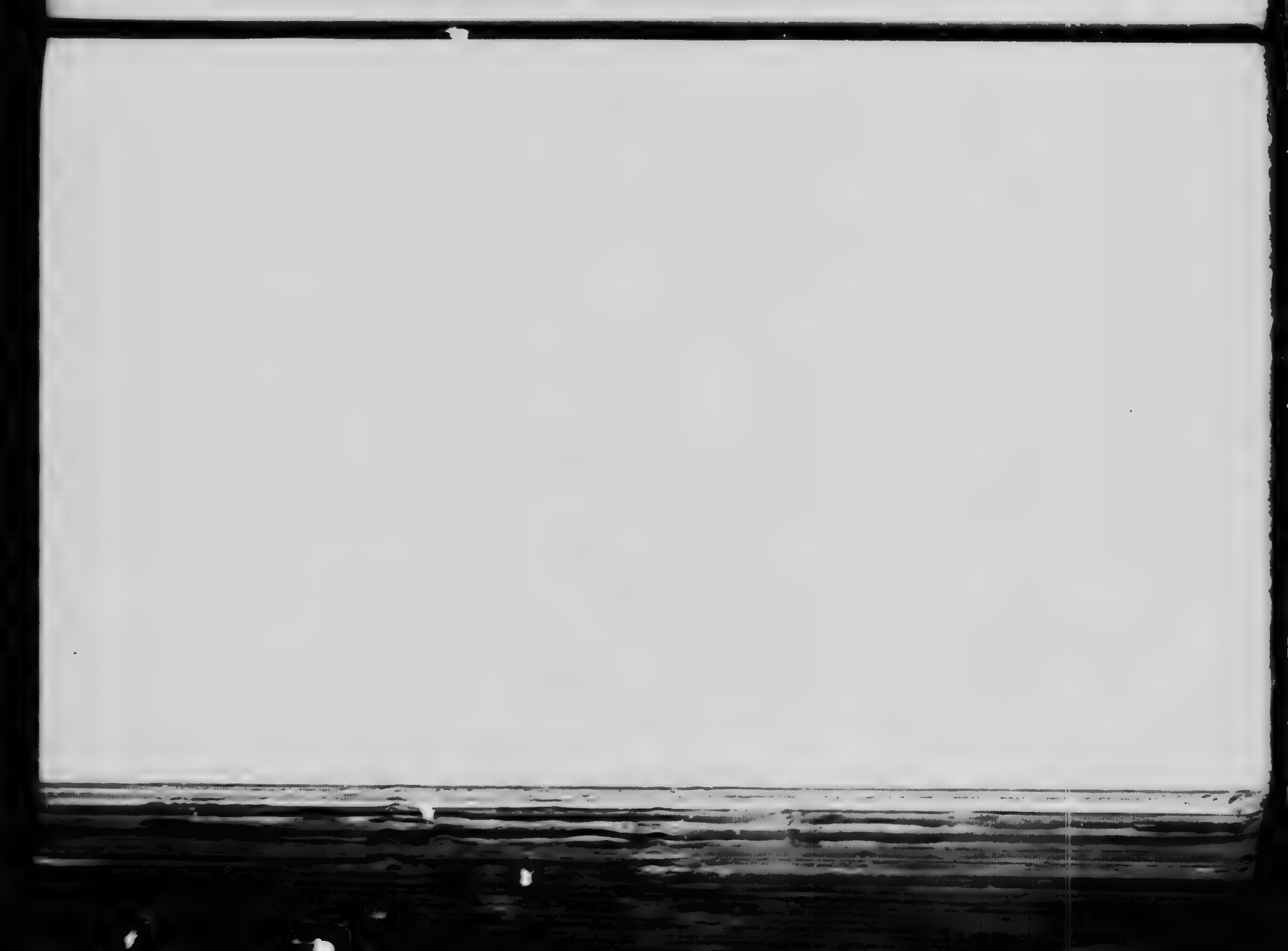
'Beware, Saracen,' he said; 'methinks our host's imagination wanders as well on the subject of names as upon other matters. Thy name is Sheerkohf, and he called thee but now by another.'

'My name, when in the tent of my father,' replied the Kurdman, 'was Ilderim, and by this I am still distinguished by many. In the field, and to soldiers, I am known as the Lion of the Mountain, being the name my good sword hath won for me. But hush, the Hamako comes; it is to warn us to rest. I know his custom: none must watch him at his vigils.'

The anchorite accordingly entered, and folding his arms on his bosom as he stood before them, said with a solemn voice, 'Blessed be His name, who hath appointed the quiet night to



EACH WARRIOR PRAYED, ERE HE ADDRESSED HIMSELF TO HIS PLACE OF REST.



follow the busy day, and the calm sleep to refresh the wearied limbs, and to compose the troubled spirit!'

Both warriors replied 'Amen!' and, arising from the table, prepared to betake themselves to the couches which their host indicated by waving his hand, as, making a reverence to each, he again withdrew from the apartment.

The Knight of the Leopard then disarmed himself of his heavy panoply, his Saracen companion kindly assisting him to undo his buckler and clasps, until he remained in the close dress of chamois leather which knights and men-at-arms used to wear under their harness. The Saracen, if he had admired the strength of his adversary when sheathed in steel, was now no less struck with the accuracy of proportion displayed in his nervous and well-compacted figure. The knight, on the other hand, as, in exchange of courtesy, he assisted the Saracen to disrobe himself of his upper garments, that he might sleep with more convenience, was on his side at a loss to conceive how such slender proportions and slimness of figure could be reconciled with the vigour he had displayed in personal contest.

Each warrior prayed, ere he addressed himself to his place of rest. The Moslem turned towards his *kebla*, the point to which the prayer of each follower of the Prophet was to be addressed, and murmured his heathen orisons; while the Christian, withdrawing from the contamination of the infidel's neighbourhood, placed his huge cross-handled sword upright, and kneeling before it as the sign of salvation, told his rosary with a devotion which was enhanced by the recollection of the scenes through which he had passed, and the dangers from which he had been rescued in the course of the day. Both warriors, worn by toil and travel, were soon fast asleep, each on his separate pallet.

CHAPTER IV

KENNETH, the Scot, was uncertain how long his senses had been lost in profound repose, when he was roused to recollection by a sense of oppression on his chest, which at first suggested a flitting dream of struggling with a powerful opponent, and at length recalled him fully to his senses. He was about to demand who was there, when, opening his eyes, he beheld the figure of the anchorite, wild and savage-looking as we have described him, standing by his bedside, and pressing his right hand upon his breast, while he held a small silver lamp in the other.

'Be silent,' said the hermit, as the prostrate knight looked up in surprise; 'I have that to say to you which yonder infidel must not hear.'

These words he spoke in the French language, and not in the *lingua franca*, or compound of Eastern and European dialects, which had hitherto been used amongst them.

'Arise,' he continued, 'put on thy mantle; speak not, but tread lightly, and follow me.'

Sir Kenneth arose and took his sword.

'It needs not,' answered the anchorite, in a whisper; 'we are going where spiritual arms avail much, and fleshly weapons are but as the reed and the decayed gourd.'

The knight deposited his sword by the bedside as before, and, armed only with his dagger, from which in this perilous country he never parted, prepared to attend his mysterious host.

The hermit then moved slowly forwards, and was followed by the knight, still under some uncertainty whether the dark form which glided on before to show him the path was not, in fact, the creation of a disturbed dream. They passed, like shadows, into the outer apartment, without disturbing the paynim emir, who lay still buried in repose. Before the cross and altar, in the outward room, a lamp was still burning, a

missal was displayed, and on the floor lay a discipline or penitential scourge of small cord and wire, the lashes of which were recently stained with blood — a token, no doubt, of the severe penance of the recluse. Here Theodorick kneeled down, and pointed to the knight to take his place beside him upon the sharp flints, which seemed placed for the purpose of rendering the posture of reverential devotion as uneasy as possible; he read many prayers of the Catholic Church, and chanted, in a low but earnest voice, three of the penitential psalms. These last he intermixed with sighs, and tears, and convulsive throbs, which bore witness how deeply he felt the divine poetry which he recited. The Scottish knight assisted with profound sincerity at these acts of devotion, his opinions of his host beginning, in the meantime, to be so much changed that he doubted whether, from the severity of his penance and the ardour of his prayers, he ought not to regard him as a saint; and when they arose from the ground, he stood with reverence before him, as a pupil before an honoured master. The hermit was on his side silent and abstracted for the space of a few minutes.

'Look into yonder recess, my son,' he said, pointing to the farther corner of the cell; 'there thou wilt find a veil — bring it hither.'

The knight obeyed; and, in a small aperture cut out of the wall, and secured with a door of wicker, he found the veil inquired for. When he brought it to the light, he discovered that it was torn, and soiled in some places with some dark substance. The anchorite looked at it with a deep but smothered emotion, and, ere he could speak to the Scottish knight, was compelled to vent his feelings in a convulsive groan.

'Thou art now about to look upon the richest treasure that the earth possesses,' he at length said; 'woe is me, that my eyes are unworthy to be lifted towards it! Alas! I am but the vile and despised sign, which points out to the wearied traveller a harbour of rest and security, but must itself remain for ever without doors. In vain have I fled to the very depths of the rocks and the very bosom of the thirsty desert. Mine enemy hath found me — even he whom I have denied has pursued me to my fortresses!'

He paused again for a moment, and turning to the Scottish knight, said, in a firmer tone of voice, 'You bring me a greeting from Richard of England?'

'I come from the council of Christian princes,' said the

knight; 'but the King of England being indisposed, I am not honoured with his Majesty's commands.'

'Your token?' demanded the recluse.

Sir Kenneth hesitated; former suspicions, and the marks of insanity which the hermit had formerly exhibited, rushed suddenly on his thoughts; but how suspect a man whose manners were so saintly? 'My password,' he said at length, is this—'"Kings begged of a beggar."'

'It is right,' said the hermit, while he paused; 'I know you well, but the sentinel upon his post—and mine is an important one—challenges friend as well as foe.'

He then moved forward with the lamp, leading the way into the room which they had left. The Saracen lay on his couch, still fast asleep. The hermit paused by his side and looked down on him.

'He sleeps,' he said, 'in darkness, and must not be awakened.'

The attitude of the Emir did indeed convey the idea of profound repose. One arm, flung across his body, as he lay with his face half turned to the wall, concealed, with its loose and long sleeve, the greater part of his face; but the high forehead was yet visible. Its nerves, which during his waking hours were so uncommonly active, were now motionless, as if the face had been composed of dark marble, and his long silken eyelashes closed over his piercing and hawk-like eyes. The open and relaxed hand, and the deep, regular, and soft breathing, gave all tokens of the most profound repose. The slumberer formed a singular group along with the tall forms of the hermit in his shaggy dress of goat-skins, bearing the lamp, and the knight in his close leathern coat; the former with an austere expression of ascetic gloom, the latter with anxious curiosity deeply impressed on his manly features.

'He sleeps soundly,' said the hermit, in the same low tone as before, and repeating the words, though he had changed the meaning from that which is literal to a metaphorical sense—'he sleeps in darkness, but there shall be for him a dayspring. O, Ilderim, thy waking thoughts are yet as vain and wild as those which are wheeling their giddy dance through thy sleeping brain; but the trumpet shall be heard, and the dream shall be dissolved.'

So saying, and making the knight a sign to follow him, the hermit went towards the altar, and, passing behind it, pressed a spring, which, opening without noise, showed a small iron

door wrought in the side of the cavern, so as to be almost imperceptible, unless upon the most severe scrutiny. The hermit, ere he ventured fully to open the door, dropt some oil on the hinges, which the lamp supplied. A small staircase, hewn in the rock, was discovered when the iron door was at length completely opened.

'Take the veil which I hold,' said the hermit, in a melancholy tone, 'and blind mine eyes; for I may not look on the treasure which thou art presently to behold, without sin and presumption.'

Without reply, the knight hastily muffled the recluse's head in the veil, and the latter began to ascend the staircase as one too much accustomed to the way to require the use of light, while at the same time he held the lamp to the Scot, who followed him for many steps up the narrow ascent. At length they rested in a small vault of irregular form, in one nook of which the staircase terminated, while in another corner a corresponding stair was seen to continue the ascent. In a third angle was a Gothic door, very rudely ornamented with the usual attributes of clustered columns and carving, and defended by a wicket, strongly guarded with iron, and studded with large nails. To this last point the hermit directed his steps, which seemed to falter as he approached it.

'Put off thy shoes,' he said to his attendant; 'the ground on which thou standest is holy. Banish from thy innermost heart each profane and carnal thought, for to harbour such while in this place were a deadly impiety.'

The knight laid aside his shoes as he was commanded, and the hermit stood in the meanwhile as if communing with his soul in secret prayer, and when he again moved, commanded the knight to knock at the wicket three times. He did so. The door opened spontaneously, at least Sir Kenneth beheld no one, and his senses were at once assailed by a stream of the purest light, and by a strong and almost oppressive sense of the richest perfumes. He stepped two or three paces back, and it was the space of a minute ere he recovered the dazzling and overpowering effects of the sudden change from darkness to light.

When he entered the apartment in which this brilliant lustre was displayed, he perceived that the light proceeded from a combination of silver lamps, fed with purest oil, and sending forth the richest odours, hanging by silver chains from the roof of a small Gothic chapel, hewn, like most part of the hermit's singular mansion, out of the sound and solid rock. But,

whereas, in every other place which Sir Kenneth had seen, the labour employed upon the rock had been of the simplest and coarsest description, it had in this chapel employed the invention and the chisels of the most able architects. The groined roofs rose from six columns on each side, carved with the rarest skill; and the manner in which the crossings of the concave arches were bound together, as it were, with appropriate ornaments, was all in the finest tone of the architecture and of the age. Corresponding to the line of pillars, there were on each side six richly wrought niches, each of which contained the image of one of the twelve apostles.

At the upper and eastern end of the chapel stood the altar, behind which a very rich curtain of Persian silk, embroidered deeply with gold, covered a recess, containing, unquestionably, some image or relic of no ordinary sanctity, in honour of whom this singular place of worship had been erected. Under the persuasion that this must be the case, the knight advanced to the shrine, and, kneeling down before it, repeated his devotions with fervency, during which his attention was disturbed by the curtain being suddenly raised, or rather pulled aside, how or by whom he saw not; but in the niche which was thus disclosed he beheld a cabinet of silver and ebony, with a double folding-door, the whole formed into the miniature resemblance of a Gothic church.

As he gazed with anxious curiosity on the shrine, the two folding-doors also flew open, discovering a large piece of wood, on which were blazoned the words 'VERA CRUX,' at the same time a choir of female voices sung *Gloria Patri*. The instant the strain had ceased, the shrine was closed and the curtain again drawn, and the knight who knelt at the altar might now continue his devotions undisturbed in honour of the holy relic which had been just disclosed to his view. He did this under the profound impression of one who had witnessed, with his own eyes, an awful evidence of the truth of his religion, and it was some time ere, concluding his orisons, he arose and ventured to look around him for the hermit, who had guided him to this sacred and mysterious spot. He beheld him, his head still muffled in the veil which he had himself wrapped around it, couching, like a rated hound, upon the threshold of the chapel, but, apparently, without venturing to cross it: the holiest reverence, the most penitential remorse was expressed by his posture, which seemed that of a man borne down and crushed to the earth by the burden of his inward feelings. It

seemed to the Scot that only the sense of the deepest penitence, remorse, and humiliation could have thus prostrated a frame so strong and a spirit so fiery.

He approached him as if to speak, but the recluse anticipated his purpose, murmuring in stifled tones from beneath the fold in which his head was muffled, and which sounded like a voice proceeding from the cerements of a corpse — 'Abide — abide; happy thou that mayst — the vision is not yet ended.' So saying, he reared himself from the ground, drew back from the threshold on which he had hitherto lain prostrate, and closed the door of the chapel, which, secured by a spring-bolt within, the snap of which resounded through the place, appeared so much like a part of the living rock from which the cavern was hewn that Kenneth could hardly discern where the aperture had been. He was now alone in the lighted chapel, which contained the relic to which he had lately rendered his homage, without other arms than his dagger, or other companion than his pious thoughts and dauntless courage.

Uncertain what was next to happen, but resolved to abide the course of events, Sir Kenneth paced the solitary chapel till about the time of the earliest cock-crowing. At this dead season, when night and morning met together, he heard, but from what quarter he could not discover, the sound of such a small silver bell as is rung at the elevation of the host, in the ceremony, or sacrifice, as it has been called, of the mass. The hour and the place rendered the sound fearfully solemn, and, bold as he was, the knight withdrew himself into the farther nook of the chapel, at the end opposite to the altar, in order to observe, without interruption, the consequences of this unexpected signal.

He did not wait long ere the silken curtain was again withdrawn, and the relic again presented to his view. As he sunk reverentially on his knee, he heard the sound of the lauds, or earliest office of the Catholic Church, sung by female voices, which united together in the performance as they had done in the former service. The knight was soon aware that the voices were no longer stationary in the distance, but approached the chapel and became louder, when a door, imperceptible when closed, like that by which he had himself entered, opened on the other side of the vault, and gave the tones of the choir more room to swell along the ribbed arches of the roof.

The knight fixed his eyes on the opening with breathless anxiety, and, continuing to kneel in the attitude of devotion

which the place and scene required, expected the consequence of these preparations. A procession appeared about to issue from the door. First, four beautiful boys, whose arms, neck, and legs were bare, showing the bronze complexion of the East, and contrasting with the snow-white tunics which they wore, entered the chapel by two and two. The first pair bore censers, which they swung from side to side, adding double fragrance to the odours with which the chapel already was impregnated. The second pair scattered flowers.

After these followed, in due and majestic order, the females who composed the choir — six who, from their black scapularies and black veils over their white garments, appeared to be professed nuns of the order of Mount Carmel, and as many whose veils, being white, argued them to be novices, or occasional inhabitants in the cloister, who were not as yet bound to it by vows. The former held in their hands large rosaries, while the younger and lighter figures who followed carried each a chaplet of red and white roses. They moved in procession around the chapel without appearing to take the slightest notice of Kenneth, although passing so near him that their robes almost touched him; while they continued to sing, the knight doubted not that he was in one of those cloisters where the noble Christian maidens had formerly openly devoted themselves to the services of the church. Most of them had been suppressed since the Mahometans had reconquered Palestine, but many, purchasing connivance by presents, or receiving it from the clemency or contempt of the victors, still continued to observe in private the ritual to which their vows had consecrated them. Yet, though Kenneth knew this to be the case, the solemnity of the place and hour, the surprise at the sudden appearance of these votresses, and the visionary manner in which they moved past him, had such influence on his imagination, that he could scarce conceive that the fair procession which he beheld was formed of creatures of this world, so much did they resemble a choir of supernatural beings rendering homage to the universal object of adoration.

Such was the knight's first idea, as the procession passed him, scarce moving, save just sufficiently to continue their progress; so that, seen by the shadowy and religious light which the lamps shed through the clouds of incense which darkened the apartment, they appeared rather to glide than to walk.

But as a second time, in surrounding the chapel, they passed the spot on which he kneeled, one of the white-stoled maidens,

as she glided by him, detached from the chaplet which she carried a rosebud, which dropped from her fingers, perhaps unconsciously, on the foot of Sir Kenneth. The knight started as if a dart had suddenly struck his person; for, when the mind is wound up to a high pitch of feeling and expectation, the slightest incident, if unexpected, gives fire to the train which imagination has already laid. But he suppressed his emotion, recollecting how easily an incident so indifferent might have happened, and that it was only the uniform monotony of the movement of the choristers which made the incident in the slightest degree remarkable.

Still, while the procession for the third time surrounded the chapel, the thoughts and the eyes of Kenneth followed exclusively the one among the novices who had dropped the rosebud. Her step, her face, her form were so completely assimilated to the rest of the choristers, that it was impossible to perceive the least marks of individuality, and yet Kenneth's heart throbbed like a bird that would burst from its cage, as if to assure him, by its sympathetic suggestions, that the female who held the right file on the second rank of the novices was dearer to him, not only than all the rest that were present, but than the whole sex besides. The romantic passion of love, as it was cherished, and indeed enjoined, by the rules of chivalry, associated well with the no less romantic feelings of devotion; and they might be said much more to enhance than to counteract each other. It was, therefore, with a glow of expectation that had something even of a religious character that Sir Kenneth, his sensations thrilling from his heart to the ends of his fingers, expected some second sign of the presence of one who, he strongly fancied, had already bestowed on him the first. Short as the space was during which the procession again completed a third perambulation of the chapel, it seemed an eternity to Kenneth. At length the form which he had watched with such devoted attention drew nigh; there was no difference betwixt that shrouded figure and the others with whom it moved in concert and in unison, until, just as she passed for the third time the kneeling Crusader, a part of a little and well-proportioned hand, so beautifully formed as to give the highest idea of the perfect proportions of the form to which it belonged, stole through the folds of the gauze, like a moonbeam through the fleecy cloud of a summer night, and again a rosebud lay at the feet of the Knight of the Leopard.

This second intimation could not be accidental: it could not

be fortuitous — the resemblance of that half-seen, but beautiful, female hand with one which his lips had once touched, and, while they touched it, had internally sworn allegiance to the lovely owner. Had farther proof been wanting, there was the glimmer of that matchless ruby ring on that snow-white finger, whose invaluable worth Kenneth would yet have prized less than the slightest sign which that finger could have made; and, veiled too, as she was, he might see, by chance or by favour, a stray curl of the dark tresses, each hair of which was dearer to him a hundred times than a chain of massive gold. It was the lady of his love! But that she should be here, in the savage and sequestered desert, among vestals who rendered themselves habitants of wilds and of caverns that they might perform in secret those Christian rites which they dared not assist in openly — that this should be so, in truth and in reality, seemed too incredible: it must be a dream — a delusive trance of the imagination. While these thoughts passed through the mind of Kenneth, the same passage by which the procession had entered the chapel received them on their return. The young sacristans, the sable nuns vanished successively through the open door; at length she from whom he had received this double intimation passed also; yet, in passing, turned her head, slightly indeed, but perceptibly, towards the place where he remained fixed as an image. He marked the last wave of her veil; it was gone — and a darkness sunk upon his soul, scarce less palpable than that which almost immediately enveloped his external sense; for the last chorister had no sooner crossed the threshold of the door than it shut with a loud sound, and at the same instant the voices of the choir were silent, the lights of the chapel were at once extinguished, and Sir Kenneth remained solitary and in total darkness. But to Kenneth solitude and darkness, and the uncertainty of his mysterious situation, were as nothing: he thought not of them — cared not for them — cared for nought in the world save the flitting vision which had just glided past him, and the tokens of her favour which she had bestowed. To grope on the floor for the buds which she had dropped — to press them to his lips — to his bosom — now alternately, now together — to rivet his lips to the cold stones on which, as near as he could judge, she had so lately stept — to play all the extravagances which strong affection suggests and vindicates to those who yield themselves up to it, were but the tokens of passionate love common to all ages. But it was peculiar to the times of chivalry, that in his

wildest rapture the knight imagined of no attempt to follow or to trace the object of such romantic attachment; that he thought of her as of a deity, who, having deigned to show herself for an instant to her devoted worshipper, had again returned to the darkness of her sanctuary, or as an influential planet, which, having darted in some auspicious minute one favourable ray, wrapped itself again in its veil of mist. The motions of the lady of his love were to him those of a superior being, who was to move without watch or control, rejoice him by her appearance or depress him by her absence, animate him by her kindness or drive him to despair by her cruelty — all at her own free-will, and without other importunity or remonstrance than that expressed by the most devoted services of the heart and sword of the champion, whose sole object in life was to fulfil her commands, and, by the splendour of his own achievements, to exalt her fame.

Such were the rules of chivalry, and of the love which was its ruling principle. But Sir Kenneth's attachment was rendered romantic by other and still more peculiar circumstances. He had never even heard the sound of his lady's voice, though he had often beheld her beauty with rapture. She moved in a circle which his rank of knighthood permitted him indeed to approach, but not to mingle with; and highly as he stood distinguished for warlike skill and enterprise, still the poor Scottish soldier was compelled to worship his divinity at a distance almost as great as divides the Persian from the sun which he adores. But when was the pride of woman too lofty to overlook the passionate devotion of a lover, however inferior in degree? Her eye had been on him in the tournament, her ear had heard his praises in the report of the battles which were daily fought: and while count, duke, and lord contended for her grace, it flowed, unwillingly perhaps at first, or even unconsciously, towards the poor Knight of the Leopard, who, to support his rank, had little besides his sword. When she looked, and when she listened, the lady saw and heard enough to encourage her in a partiality which had at first crept on her unawares. If a knight's personal beauty was praised, even the most prudish dames of the military court of England would make an exception in favour of the Scottish Kenneth; and it oftentimes happened that, notwithstanding the very considerable largesses which princes and peers bestowed on the minstrels, an impartial spirit of independence would seize the poet, and the harp was swept to the heroism of one who had neither palfreys nor garments to bestow in guerdon of his applause.

The moments when she listened to the praises of her lover became gradually more and more dear to the high-born Edith, relieving the flattery with which her ear was weary, and presenting to her a subject of secret contemplation, more worthy, as he seemed by general report, than those who surpassed him in rank and in the gifts of fortune. As her attention became constantly, though cautiously, fixed on Sir Kenneth, she grew more and more convinced of his personal devotion to herself, and more and more certain in her mind that in Kenneth of Scotland she beheld the fated knight doomed to share with her through weal and woe — and the prospect looked gloomy and dangerous — the passionate attachment to which the poets of the age ascribed such universal dominion, and which its manners and morals placed nearly on the same rank with devotion itself.

Let us not disguise the truth from our readers. When Edith became aware of the state of her own sentiments, chivalrous as were her sentiments, becoming a maiden not distant from the throne of England, gratified as her pride must have been with the mute though unceasing homage rendered to her by the knight whom she had distinguished, there were moments when the feelings of the woman, loving and beloved, murmured against the restraints of state and form by which she was surrounded, and when she almost blamed the timidity of her lover, who seemed resolved not to infringe them. The etiquette, to use a modern phrase, of birth and rank had drawn around her a magical circle, beyond which Sir Kenneth might indeed bow and gaze, but within which he could no more pass than an evoked spirit can transgress the boundaries prescribed by the rod of a powerful enchanter. The thought involuntarily pressed on her, that she herself must venture, were it but the point of her fairy foot, beyond the prescribed boundary, if she ever hoped to give a lover so reserved and bashful an opportunity of so slight a favour as but to salute her shoe-tie. There was an example, the noted precedent of the 'king's daughter of Hungary,' who thus generously encouraged the 'squire of low degree'; and Edith, though of kingly blood, was no king's daughter, any more than her lover was of low degree: fortune had put no such extreme barrier in obstacle to their affections. Something, however, within the maiden's bosom — that modest pride which throws fetters even on love itself — forbade her, notwithstanding the superiority of her condition, to make those advances which, in every case, delicacy assigns to the other sex; above all, Sir Kenneth was a knight so gentle and honour-

able, so highly accomplished, as her imagination at least suggested, together with the strictest feelings of what was due to himself and to her, that, however constrained her attitude might be while receiving his adorations, like the image of some deity, who is neither supposed to feel nor to reply to the homage of its votaries, still the idol feared that to step prematurely from her pedestal would be to degrade herself in the eyes of her devoted worshipper.

Yet the devout adorer of an actual idol can even discover signs of approbation in the rigid and immovable features of a marble image, and it is no wonder that something, which could be as favourably interpreted, glanced from the bright eye of the lovely Edith, whose beauty, indeed, consisted rather more in that very power of expression than on absolute regularity of contour or brilliancy of complexion. Some slight marks of distinction had escaped from her, notwithstanding her own jealous vigilance, else how could Sir Kenneth have so readily, and so undoubtedly, recognised the lovely hand, of which scarce two fingers were visible from under the veil, or how could he have rested so thoroughly assured that two flowers, successively dropt on the spot, were intended as a recognition on the part of his lady love? By what train of observation, by what secret signs, looks, or gestures, by what instinctive freemasonry of love, this degree of intelligence came to subsist between Edith and her lover, we cannot attempt to trace; for we are old, and such slight vestiges of affection, quickly discovered by younger eyes, defy the power of ours. Enough, that such affection did subsist between parties who had never even spoken to one another, though, on the side of Edith, it was checked by a deep sense of the difficulties and dangers which must necessarily attend the further progress of their attachment, and upon that of the knight by a thousand doubts and fears, lest he had overestimated the slight tokens of the lady's notice, varied, as they necessarily were, by long intervals of apparent coldness, during which either the fear of exciting the observation of others, and thus drawing danger upon her lover, or that of sinking in his esteem by seeming too willing to be won, made her behave with indifference, and as if unobservant of his presence.

This narrative, tedious perhaps, but which the story renders necessary, may serve to explain the state of intelligence, if it deserves so strong a name, betwixt the lovers, when Edith's unexpected appearance in the chapel produced so powerful an effect on the feelings of her knight.

CHAPTER V

Their necromantic forms in vain
Haunt us on the tented plain ;
We bid these spectre shapes avaunt,
Ashtaroth and Termagaunt.

WARTON.

THE most profound silence, the deepest darkness continued to brood for more than an hour over the chapel in which we left the Knight of the Leopard still kneeling, alternately expressing thanks to Heaven and gratitude to his lady, for the boon which had been vouchsafed to him. His own safety, his own destiny, for which he was at all times little anxious, had not now the weight of a grain of dust in his reflections. He was in the neighbourhood of Lady Edith, he had received tokens of her grace, he was in a place hallowed by relics of the most awful sanctity. A Christian soldier, a devoted lover could fear nothing, think of nothing, but his duty to Heaven and his devoir to his lady.

At the lapse of the space of time which we have noticed, a shrill whistle, like that with which a falconer calls his hawk, was heard to ring sharply through the vaulted chapel. It was a sound ill suited to the place, and reminded Sir Kenneth how necessary it was he should be upon his guard. He started from his knee, and laid his hand upon his poniard. A creaking sound, as of a screw or pulleys, succeeded, and a light streaming upwards, as from an opening in the floor, showed that a trap-door had been raised or depressed. In less than a minute, a long skinny arm, partly naked, partly clothed in a sleeve of red samite, arose out of the aperture, holding a lamp as high as it could stretch upwards, and the figure to which the arm belonged ascended step by step to the level of the chapel floor. The form and face of the being who thus presented himself were those of a frightful dwarf, with a large head, a cap fantastically adorned with three peacock-feathers, a dress of red samite,

the richness of which rendered his ugliness more conspicuous, distinguished by gold bracelets and armlets, and a white silk sash, in which he wore a gold-hilted dagger. This singular figure had in his left hand a kind of broom. So soon as he had stepped from the aperture through which he arose, he stood still, and, as if to show himself more distinctly, moved the lamp which he held slowly over his face and person, successively illuminating his wild and fantastic features, and his misshapen, but nervous, limbs. Though disproportioned in person, the dwarf was not so distorted as to argue any want of strength or activity. While Sir Kenneth gazed on this disagreeable object, the popular creed occurred to his remembrance, concerning the gnomes, or earthly spirits, which make their abode in the caverns of the earth; and so much did this figure correspond with ideas he had formed of their appearance, that he looked on it with disgust, mingled not indeed with fear, but that sort of awe which the presence of a supernatural creature may infuse into the most steady bosom.

The dwarf again whistled, and summoned from beneath a companion. This second figure ascended in the same manner as the first; but it was a female arm, in this second instance, which upheld the lamp from the subterranean vault out of which these presentments arose, and it was a female form much resembling the first in shape and proportions which slowly emerged from the floor. Her dress was also of red samite, fantastically cut and flounced, as if she had been dressed for some exhibition of mimes or jugglers; and with the same minuteness which her predecessor had exhibited, she passed the lamp over her face and person, which seemed to rival the male's in ugliness. But, with all this most unfavourable exterior, there was one trait in the features of both which argued alertness and intelligence in the most uncommon degree. This arose from the brilliancy of their eyes, which, deep-set beneath black and shaggy brows, gleamed with a lustre which, like that in the eye of the toad, seemed to make some amends for the extreme ugliness of countenance and person.

Sir Kenneth remained as if spellbound, while this unlovely pair, moving round the chapel close to each other, appeared to perform the duty of sweeping it, like menials; but, as they used only one hand, the floor was not much benefited by the exercise, which they plied with such oddity of gestures and manner as befitted their bizarre and fantastic appearance. When they approached near to the knight, in the course of

their occupation, they ceased to use their brooms, and placing themselves side by side, directly opposite to Sir Kenneth, they again slowly shifted the lights which they held, so as to allow him distinctly to survey features which were not rendered more agreeable by being brought nearer, and to observe the extreme quickness and keenness with which their black and glittering eyes flashed back the light of the lamps. They then turned the gleam of both lights upon the knight, and having accurately surveyed him, turned their faces to each other, and set up a loud yelling laugh, which resounded in his ears. The sound was so ghastly, that Sir Kenneth started at hearing it, and hastily demanded, in the name of God, who they were who profaned that holy place with such antic gestures and elritch exclamations.

'I am the dwarf Nectabanus,' said the abortion-seeming male, in a voice corresponding to his figure, and resembling the voice of the night-crow more than any sound which is heard by daylight.

'And I am Guenevra, his lady and his love,' replied the female, in tones which, being shriller, were yet wilder than those of her companion.

'Wherefore are you here?' again demanded the knight, scarcely yet assured that it was human beings which he saw before him.

'I am,' replied the male dwarf, with much assumed gravity and dignity, 'the twelfth imaum — I am Mohammed Mohadi, the guide and the conductor of the faithful. An hundred horses stand ready saddled for me and my train at the Holy City, and as many at the City of Refuge. I am he who shall bear witness, and this is one of my houris.'

'Thou liest,' answered the female, interrupting her companion, in tones yet shriller than his own: 'I am none of thy houris, and thou art no such infidel trash as the Mohammed of whom thou speakest. May my curse rest upon his coffin! I tell thee, thou ass of Issachar, thou art King Arthur of Britain, whom the fairies stole away from the field of Avalon; and I am Dame Guenevra, famed for her beauty.'

'But, in truth, noble sir,' said the male, 'we are distressed princes, dwelling under the wing of King Guy of Jerusalem, until he was driven out from his own nest by the foul infidels — Heaven's bolts consume them!'

'Hush,' said a voice from the side upon which the knight had entered — 'hush, fools, and begone; your ministry is ended.'

The dwarfs had no sooner heard the command than, gibber-

ing in discordant whispers to each other, they blew out their lights at once, and left the knight in utter darkness, which, when the pattering of their retiring feet had died away, was soon accompanied by its fittest companion, total silence.

The knight felt the departure of these unfortunate creatures a relief. He could not, from their language, manners, and appearance, doubt that they belonged to the degraded class of beings whom deformity of person and weakness of intellect recommended to the painful situation of appendages to great families, where their personal appearance and imbecility were food for merriment to the household. Superior in no respect to the ideas and manners of his time, the Scottish knight might, at another period, have been much amused by the mummery of these poor effigies of humanity; but now their appearance, gesticulations, and language broke the train of deep and solemn feeling with which he was impressed, and he rejoiced in the disappearance of the unhappy objects.

A few minutes after they had retired, the door at which they [the knight] had entered opened slowly, and, remaining ajar, discovered a faint light arising from a lantern placed upon the threshold. Its doubtful and wavering gleam showed a dark form reclined beside the entrance, but without its precincts, which, on approaching it more nearly, he recognised to be the hermit, couching in the same humble posture in which he had at first laid himself down, and which doubtless he had retained during the whole time of his guest's continuing in the chapel.

'All is over,' said the hermit, as he heard the knight approaching, 'and the most wretched of earthly sinners, with him who should think himself most honoured and most happy among the race of humanity, must retire from this place. Take the light, and guide me down the descent, for I may not uncover my eyes until I am far from this hallowed spot.'

The Scottish knight obeyed in silence, for a solemn and yet ecstatic sense of what he had seen had silenced even the eager workings of curiosity. He led the way, with considerable accuracy, through the various secret passages and stairs by which they had ascended, until at length they found themselves in the outward cell of the hermit's cavern.

'The condemned criminal is restored to his dungeon, reprieved from one miserable day to another, until his awful Judge shall at length appoint the well-deserved sentence to be carried into execution.'

As the hermit spoke these words, he laid aside the veil with

which his eyes had been bound, and looked at it with a suppressed and hollow sigh. No sooner had he restored it to the crypt from which he had caused the Scot to bring it than he said hastily and sternly to his companion — 'Begone — begone! to rest — to rest! You may sleep — you can sleep; I neither can nor may.'

Respecting the profound agitation with which this was spoken, the knight retired into the inner cell; but, casting back his eye as he left the exterior grotto, he beheld the anchorite stripping his shoulders with frantic haste of their shaggy mantle, and ere he could shut the frail door which separated the two compartments of the cavern, he heard the clang of the scourge, and the groans of the penitent under his self-inflicted penance. A cold shudder came over the knight as h. reflected what could be the foulness of the sin, what the depth of the remorse, which, apparently, such severe penance could neither cleanse nor assuage. He told his beads devoutly, and flung himself on his rude couch, after a glance at the still sleeping Moslem, and, wearied by the various scenes of the day and the night, soon slept as sound as infancy. Upon his awaking in the morning, he held certain conferences with the hermit upon matters of importance, and the result of their intercourse induced him to remain for two days longer in the grotto. He was regular, as became a pilgrim, in his devotional exercises, but was not again admitted to the chapel in which he had seen such wonders.

CHAPTER VI

Now change the scene — and let the trumpets sound,
For we must rouse the lion from his lair.

Old Play.

THE scene must change, as our programme has announced, from the mountain wilderness of Jordan to the camp of King Richard of England, then stationed betwixt Jean d'Acre and Ascalon, and containing that army with which he of the Lion Heart had promised himself a triumphant march to Jerusalem, and in which he would probably have succeeded, if not hindered by the jealousies of the Christian princes engaged in the same enterprise, and the offence taken by them at the uncurbed haughtiness of the English monarch, and Richard's unveiled contempt for his brother sovereigns, who, his equals in rank, were yet far his inferiors in courage, hardihood, and military talents. Such discords, and particularly those betwixt Richard and Philip of France, created disputes and obstacles which impeded every active measure proposed by the heroic although impetuous Richard, while the ranks of the Crusaders daily thinned not only by the desertion of individuals, but re bands, headed by their respective feudal leaders, who withdrew from a contest in which they had ceased to hope for success.

The effects of the climate became, as usual, fatal to soldiers from the north, and the more so, that the dissolute license of the Crusaders, forming a singular contrast to the principles and purpose of their taking up arms, rendered them more easy victims to the insalubrious influence of burning heat and chilling dews. To these discouraging causes of loss was to be added the sword of the enemy. Saladin, than whom no greater name recorded in Eastern history, had learnt to his fatal experience that his light-armed followers were little able to meet in close encounter with the ironclad Franks, and had been taught, at same time, to apprehend and dread the adventurous char-

acter of his antagonist Richard. But, if his armies were more than once routed with great slaughter, his numbers gave the Saracen the advantage in those lighter skirmishes of which many were inevitable.

As the army of his assailants decreased, the enterprises of the Sultan became more numerous and more bold in this species of petty warfare. The camp of the Crusaders was surrounded, and almost besieged, by clouds of light cavalry, resembling swarms of wasps, easily crushed when they are once grasped, but furnished with wings to elude superior strength and stings to inflict harm and mischief. There was perpetual warfare of posts and foragers, in which many valuable lives were lost, without any corresponding object being gained; convoys were intercepted, and communications were cut off. The Crusaders had to purchase the means of sustaining life by life itself; and water, like that of the well of Bethlehem, longed for by King David, one of its ancient monarchs, was then, as before, only obtained by the expenditure of blood.

These evils were, in a great measure, counterbalanced by the stern resolution and restless activity of King Richard, who, with some of his best knights, was ever on horseback, ready to repair to any point where danger occurred, and often not only bringing unexpected succour to the Christians, but discomfiting the infidels when they seemed most secure of victory. But even the iron frame of Cœur-de-Lion could not support, without injury, the alternations of the unwholesome climate, joined to ceaseless exertions of body and mind. He became afflicted with one of those slow and wasting fevers peculiar to Asia, and, in despite of his great strength, and still greater courage, grew first unfit to mount on horseback, and then unable to attend the councils of war which were, from time to time, held by the Crusaders. It was difficult to say whether this state of personal inactivity was rendered more galling or more endurable to the English monarch by the resolution of the council to engage in a truce of thirty days with the Sultan Saladin; for, on the one hand, if he was incensed at the delay which this interposed to the progress of the great enterprise, he was, on the other, somewhat consoled by knowing that others were not acquiring laurels while he remained inactive upon a sick-bed.

That, however, which Cœur-de-Lion could least excuse was the general inactivity which prevailed in the camp of the Crusaders so soon as his illness assumed a serious aspect; and the reports which he extracted from his unwilling attendants

gave him to understand that the hopes of the host had abated in proportion to his illness, and that the interval of truce was employed, not in recruiting their numbers, reanimating their courage, fostering their spirit of conquest, and preparing for a speedy and determined advance upon the Holy City, which was the object of their expedition, but in securing the camp occupied by their diminished followers with trenches, palisades, and other fortifications, as if preparing rather to repel an attack from a powerful enemy so soon as hostilities should recommence than to assume the proud character of conquerors and assailants.

The English king chafed under these reports, like the imprisoned lion viewing his prey from the iron barriers of his cage. Naturally rash and impetuous, the irritability of his temper preyed on itself. He was dreaded by his attendants, and even the medical assistants feared to assume the necessary authority which a physician, to do justice to his patient, must needs exercise over him. One faithful baron, who, perhaps from the congenial nature of his disposition, was devoutly attached to the King's person, dared alone to come between the dragon and his wrath, and quietly, but firmly, maintained a control which no other dared assume over the dangerous invalid, and which Thomas de Multon only exercised because he esteemed his sovereign's life and honour more than he did the degree of favour which he might lose, or even the risk which he might incur, in nursing a patient so refractable, and whose displeasure was so perilous.

Sir Thomas was the Lord of Gilsland, in Cumberland, and, in an age when surnames and titles were not distinctly attached, as now, to the individuals who bore them, he was called by the Normans the Lord de Vaux, and in English, by the Saxons, who clung to their native language, and were proud of the share of Saxon blood in this renowned warrior's veins, he was termed Thomas, or, more familiarly, Thom, of the Gills, or Narrow Valleys, from which his extensive domains derived their well-known appellation.

This chief had been exercised in almost all the wars, whether waged betwixt England and Scotland or amongst the various domestic factions which then tore the former country asunder, and in all had been distinguished as well from his military conduct as his personal prowess. He was, in other respects, a rude soldier, blunt and careless in his bearing, and taciturn, nay, almost sullen, in his habits of society, and seeming, at

least, to disclaim all knowledge of policy and of courtly art. There were men, however, who pretended to look deeply into character, who asserted that the Lord de Vaux was not less shrewd and aspiring than he was blunt and bold, and who thought that, while he assimilated himself to the King's own character of blunt hardihood, it was, in some degree at least, with an eye to establish his favour, and to gratify his own hopes of deep-laid ambition. But no one cared to thwart his schemes, if such he had, by rivalling him in the dangerous occupation of daily attendance on the sick-bed of a patient whose disease was pronounced infectious, and more especially when it was remembered that the patient was Cœur-de-Lion, suffering under all the furious impatience of a soldier withheld from battle, and a sovereign sequestered from authority; and the common soldiers, at least in the English army, were generally of opinion that De Vaux attended on the King like comrade upon comrade, in the honest and disinterested frankness of military friendship, contracted between the partakers of daily dangers.

It was on the decline of a Syrian day that Richard lay on his couch of sickness, loathing it as much in mind as his illness made it irksome to his body. His bright blue eye, which at all times shone with uncommon keenness and splendour, had its vivacity augmented by fever and mental impatience, and glanced from among his curled and unshorn locks of yellow hair as fitfully and as vividly as the last gleams of the sun shoot through the clouds of an approaching thunderstorm, which still, however, are gilded by its beams. His manly features showed the progress of wasting illness, and his beard, neglected and untrimmed, had overgrown both lips and chin. Casting himself from side to side, now clutching towards him the coverings, which at the next moment he flung as impatiently from him, his tossed couch and impatient gestures showed at once the energy and the reckless impatience of a disposition whose natural sphere was that of the most active exertion.

Beside his couch stood Thomas de Vaux, in face, attitude, and manner the strongest possible contrast to the suffering monarch. His stature approached the gigantic, and his hair in thickness might have resembled that of Samson, though only after the Israelitish champion's locks had passed under the shears of the Philistines, for those of De Vaux were cut short, that they might be inclosed under his helmet. The light of

his broad, large hazel eye resembled that of the autumn morn, and it was only perturbed for a moment, when, from time to time, it was attracted by Richard's vehement marks of agitation and restlessness. His features, though massive like his person, might have been handsome before they were defaced with scars; his upper lip, after the fashion of the Normans, was covered with thick mustachios, which grew so long and luxuriantly as to mingle with his hair, and, like his hair, were dark brown, slightly brindled with grey. His frame seemed of that kind which most readily defies both toil and climate, for he was thin-flanked, broad-chested, long-armed, deep-breathed, and strong-limbed. He had not laid aside his buff-coat, which displayed the cross cut on the shoulder, for more than three nights, enjoying but such momentary repose as the warder of a sick monarch's couch might by snatches indulge. This baron rarely changed his posture, except to administer to Richard the medicine or refreshments which none of his less favoured attendants could persuade the impatient monarch to take; and there was something affecting in the kindly, yet awkward, manner in which he discharged offices so strangely contrasted with his blunt and soldierly habits and manners.

The pavilion in which these personages were had, as became the time, as well as the personal character of Richard, more of a warlike than a sumptuous or royal character. Weapons, offensive and defensive, several of them of strange and newly-invented construction, were scattered about the tented apartment, or disposed upon the pillars which supported it. Skins of animals slain in the chase were stretched on the ground, or extended along the sides of the pavilion, and, upon a heap of these silvan spoils, lay three *alans*, as they were then called (wolf-greyhounds, that is), of the largest size, and as white as snow. Their faces, marked with many a scar from clutch and fang, showed their share in collecting the trophies upon which they reposed, and their eyes, fixed from time to time with an expressive stretch and yawn upon the bed of Richard, evinced how much they marvelled at and regretted the unwonted inactivity which they were compelled to share. These were but the accompaniments of the soldier and huntsman; but, on a small table close by the bed, was placed a shield of wrought steel, of triangular form, bearing the three lions passant, first assumed by the chivalrous monarch, and before it the golden circlet, resembling much a ducal coronet, only that it

was higher in front than behind, which, with the purple velvet and embroidered tiara that lined it, formed then the emblem of England's sovereignty. Beside it, as if prompt for defending the regal symbol, lay a mighty curtal axe, which would have wearied the arm of any other than Cœur-de-Lion.

In an outer partition of the pavilion waited two or three officers of the royal household, depressed, anxious for their master's health, and not less so for their own safety, in case of his decease. Their gloomy apprehensions spread themselves to the warders without, who paced about in downcast and silent contemplation, or, resting on their halberds, stood motionless on their post, rather like armed trophies than living warriors.

'So thou hast no better news to bring me from without, Sir Thomas?' said the King, after a long and perturbed silence, spent in the feverish agitation which we have endeavoured to describe. 'All our knights turned women, and our ladies become devotees, and neither a spark of valour nor of gallantry to enlighten a camp which contains the choicest of Europe's chivalry — ha!'

'The truce, my lord,' said De Vaux, with the same patience with which he had twenty times repeated the explanation — 'the truce prevents us bearing ourselves as men of action; and, for the ladies, I am no great reveller, as is well known to your Majesty, and seldom exchange steel and buff for velvet and gold, but thus far I know, that our choicest beauties are waiting upon the Queen's Majesty and the Princess to a pilgrimage to the convent of Engaddi, to accomplish their vows for your Highness's deliverance from this trouble.'

'And is it thus,' said Richard, with the impatience of indisposition, 'that royal matrons and maidens should risk themselves, where the dogs who defile the land have as little truth to man as they have faith towards God?'

'Nay, my lord,' said De Vaux, 'they have Saladin's word for their safety.'

'True — true!' replied Richard, 'and I did the heathen soldan injustice; I owe him reparation for it. Would God I were but fit to offer it him upon my body between the two hosts, Christendom and Heathenesse both looking on!'

As Richard spoke, he thrust his right arm out of bed naked to the shoulder, and, painfully raising himself in his couch, shook his clenched hand, as if it grasped sword or battle-axe, and was then brandished over the jewelled turban of the soldan. It was not without a gentle degree of violence, which

the King would scarce have endured from another, that De Vaux, in his character of sick-nurse, compelled his royal master to replace himself in the couch, and covered his sinewy arm, neck, and shoulders with the care which a mother bestows upon an impatient child.

'Thou art a rough nurse, though a willing one, De Vaux,' said the King, laughing with a bitter expression, while he submitted to the strength which he was unable to resist; 'methinks a coif would become thy lowering features as well as a child's biggin would beseem mine. We should be a babe and nurse to frighten girls with!'

'We have frightened men in our time, my liege,' said De Vaux; 'and, I trust, may live to frighten them again. What is a fever-fit, that we should not endure it patiently, in order to get rid of it easily?'

'Fever-fit!' exclaimed Richard, impetuously; 'thou mayst think, and justly, that it is a fever-fit with me; but what is it with all the other Christian princes — with Philip of France, with that dull Austrian, with him of Montserrat, with the Hospitallers, with the Templars — what is it with all them? I will tell thee: it is a cold palsy — a dead lethargy — a disease that deprives them of speech and action — a canker that has eaten into the heart of all that is noble, and chivalrous, and virtuous among them — that has made them false to the noblest vow ever knights were sworn to — has made them indifferent to their fame, and forgetful of their God!'

'For the love of Heaven, my liege,' said De Vaux, 'take it less violently! You will be heard without doors, where such speeches are but too current already among the common soldiery, and engender discord and contention in the Christian host. Bethink you that your illness mars the mainspring of their enterprise: a mangonel will work without screw and lever better than the Christian host without King Richard.'

'Thou flatterest me, De Vaux,' said Richard; and, not insensible to the power of praise, he reclined his head on the pillow with a more deliberate attempt to repose than he had yet exhibited. But Thomas de Vaux was no courtier: the phrase which had offered had risen spontaneously to his lips, and he knew not how to pursue the pleasing theme, so as to soothe and prolong the vein which he had excited. He was silent, therefore, until, relapsing into his moody contemplations, the King demanded of him sharply, 'Despardieux! This is smoothly said to soothe a sick man! But does a league of

monarchs, an assemblage of nobles, a convocation of all the chivalry of Europe droop with the sickness of one man, though he chances to be King of England? Why should Richard's illness, or Richard's death, check the march of thirty thousand men as brave as himself? When the master stag is struck down the herd do not disperse upon his fall; when the falcon strikes the leading crane, another takes the guidance of the phalanx. Why do not the powers assemble and choose some one to whom they may entrust the guidance of the host?'

'Forsooth, and if it please your Majesty,' said De Vaux, 'I hear consultations have been held among the royal leaders for some such purpose.'

'Ha!' exclaimed Richard, his jealousy awakened, giving his mental irritation another direction. 'Am I forgot by my allies ere I have taken the last sacrament? Do they hold me dead already? But no — no, they are right. And whom do they select as leader of the Christian host?'

'Rank and dignity,' said De Vaux, 'point to the King of France.'

'Oh, ay,' answered the English monarch, 'Philip of France and Navarre — Denis Mountjoie — his Most Christian Majesty — mouth-filling words these! There is but one risk, that he might mistake the words *En arrière* for *En avant*, and lead us back to Paris instead of marching to Jerusalem. His politic head has learned by this time that there is more to be gotten by oppressing his feudatories and pillaging his allies than fighting with the Turks for the Holy Sepulchre.'

'They might choose the Archduke of Austria,' said De Vaux.

'What! because he is big and burly like thyself, Thomas — nearly as thick-headed, but without thy indifference to danger and carelessness of offence? I tell thee that Austria has in all that mass of flesh no bolder animation than is afforded by the peevishness of a wasp and the courage of a wren. Out upon him! *he* a leader of chivalry to deeds of glory! Give him a flagon of Rhenish to drink with his besmirched baarenhauters and lanceknechts.'

'There is the Grand Master of the Templars,' continued the baron, not sorry to keep his master's attention engaged on other topics than his own illness, though at the expense of the characters of prince and potentate — 'there is the Grand Master of the Templars,' he continued, 'undaunted, skilful, brave in battle, and sage in council, having no separate kingdoms of his own to divert his exertions from the recovery of

the Holy Land — what thinks your Majesty of the Master as a general leader of the Christian host?'

'Ha, Beau-Seant!' answered the King. 'Oh, no exception can be taken to Brother Giles Amaury: he understands the ordering of a battle, and the fighting in front when it begins. But, Sir Thomas, were it fair to take the Holy Land from the heathen Saladin, so full of all the virtues which may distinguish unchristened man, and give it to Giles Amaury, a worse pagan than himself, an idolater, a devil-worshipper, a necromancer, who practises crimes the most dark and unnatural, in the vaults and secret places of abomination and darkness?'

'The Grand Master of the Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem is not tainted by fame either with heresy or magic,' said Thomas de Vaux.

'But is he not a sordid miser?' said Richard, hastily — 'has he not been suspected — ay, more than suspected — of selling to the infidels those advantages which they would never have won by fair force? Tush, man, better give the army to be made merchandise of by Venetian skippers and Lombardy pedlars than trust it to the Grand Master of St. John.'

'Well, then, I will venture but another guess,' said the Baron de Vaux. 'What say you to the gallant Marquis of Montserrat, so wise, so elegant, such a good man-at-arms?'

'Wise! cunning, you would say,' replied Richard; 'elegant in a lady's chamber, if you will. Oh, ay, Conrade of Montserrat — who knows not the popinjay? Politic and versatile, he will change you his purposes as often as the trimmings of his doublet, and you shall never be able to guess the hue of his inmost vestments from their outward colours. A man-at-arms! ay, a fine figure on horseback, and can bear him well in the tilt-yard and at the barriers, when swords are blunted at point and edge, and spears are tipped with trenchers of wood instead of steel pikes. Wert thou not with me when I said to that same gay marquis, "Here we be, three good Christians, and on yonder plain there pricks a band of some threescore Saracens, what say you to charge them briskly? There are but twenty unbelieving miscreants to each true knight."'

'I recollect the marquis replied,' said De Vaux, 'that "His limbs were of flesh, not of iron, and that he would rather bear the heart of a man than of a beast, though that beast were the lion." But I see how it is: we shall end where we began, without hope of praying at the Sepulchre, until Heaven shall restore King Richard to health.'

At this grave remark, Richard burst out into a hearty fit of laughter, the first which he had for some time indulged in. 'Why, what a thing is conscience,' he said, 'that through its means even such a thick-witted northern lord as thou canst bring thy sovereign to confess his folly! It is true that, did they not propose themselves as fit to hold my leading-staff, little should I care for plucking the silken trappings off the puppets thou hast shown me in succession. What concerns it me what fine tinsel robes they swagger in, unless when they are named as rivals in the glorious enterprise to which I have vowed myself? Yes, De Vaux, I confess my weakness, and the wilfulness of my ambition. The Christian camp contains, doubtless, many a better knight than Richard of England, and it would be wise and worthy to assign to the best of them the leading of the host; but,' continued the warlike monarch, raising himself in his bed, and shaking the cover from his head, while his eyes sparkled as they were wont to do on the eve of battle, 'were such a knight to plant the banner of the Cross on the Temple of Jerusalem, while I was unable to bear my share in the noble task, he should, so soon as I was fit to lay lance in rest, undergo my challenge to mortal combat, for having diminished my fame, and pressed in before to the object of my enterprise. But hark, what trumpets are those at a distance?'

'Those of King Philip, as I guess, my liege,' said the stout Englishman.

'Thou art dull of ear, Thomas,' said the King, endeavouring to start up, 'hearest thou not that clash and clang? By Heaven, the Turks are in the camp. I hear their *lelies*.'

He again endeavoured to get out of bed, and De Vaux was obliged to exercise his own great strength, and also to summon the assistance of the chamberlains from the inner tent, to restrain him.

'Thou art a false traitor, De Vaux,' said the incensed monarch, when, breathless and exhausted with struggling, he was compelled to submit to superior strength, and to repose in quiet on his couch. 'I would I were — I would I were but strong enough to dash thy brains out with my battle-axe!'

'I would you had the strength, my liege,' said De Vaux, 'and would even take the risk of its being so employed. The odds would be great in favour of Christendom, were Thomas Multon dead and Cœur-de-Lion himself again.'

'Mine honest, faithful servant,' said Richard, extending his hand, which the baron reverentially saluted, 'forgive thy

master's impatience of mood. It is this burning fever which chides thee, and not thy kind master, Richard of England. But go, I prithee, and bring me word what strangers are in the camp, for these sounds are not of Christendom.'

De Vaux left the pavilion on the errand assigned, and in his absence, which he had resolved should be brief, he charged the chamberlains, pages, and attendants to redouble their attention on their sovereign, with threats of holding them to responsibility, which rather added to than diminished their timid anxiety in the discharge of their duty; for next perhaps to the ire of the monarch himself, they dreaded that of the stern and inexorable Lord of Gilsland.[1]

[1] See Note 5.

CHAPTER VII

There never was a time on the march parts yet
When Scottish with English met,
But it was marvel if the red blood ran not
As the rain does in the street.

Battle of Otterbourn.

A CONSIDERABLE band of Scottish warriors had joined the Crusaders, and had naturally placed themselves under the command of the English monarch, being, like his native troops, most of them of Saxon and Norman descent, speaking the same languages, possessed, some of them, of English as well as Scottish demesnes, and allied, in some cases, by blood and intermarriage. The period also preceded that when the grasping ambition of Edward I. gave a deadly and envenomed character to the wars betwixt the two nations; the English fighting for the subjugation of Scotland, and the Scottish, with all the stern determination and obstinacy which has ever characterised their nation, for the defence of their independence, by the most violent means, under the most disadvantageous circumstances, and at the most extreme hazard. As yet, wars betwixt the two nations, though fierce and frequent, had been conducted on principles of fair hostility, and admitted of those softening shades by which courtesy, and the respect for open and generous foemen, qualify and mitigate the horrors of war. In time of peace, therefore, and especially when both, as at present, were engaged in war, waged in behalf of a common cause, and rendered dear to them by their ideas of religion, the adventurers of both countries frequently fought side by side, their natural emulation serving only to stimulate them to excel each other in their efforts against the common enemy.

The frank and martial character of Richard, who made no distinction betwixt his own subjects and those of William of Scotland, excepting as they bore themselves in the field of battle, tended much to conciliate the troops of both nations.

But upon his illness, and the disadvantageous circumstances in which the Crusaders were placed, the national disunion between the various bands united in the Crusade began to display itself, just as old wounds break out afresh in the human body when under the influence of disease or debility.

The Scottish and English, equally jealous and high-spirited, and apt to take offence — the former the more so, because the poorer and the weaker nation — began to fill up, by internal dissension, the period when the truce forbade them to wreak their united vengeance on the Saracens. Like the contending Roman chiefs of old, the Scottish would admit no superiority, and their southern neighbours would brook no equality. There were charges and recriminations, and both the common soldiery and their leaders and commanders, who had been good comrades in time of victory, lowered on each other in the period of adversity, as if their union had not been then more essential than ever, not only to the success of their common cause, but to their joint safety. The same disunion had begun to show itself betwixt the French and English, the Italians and the Germans, and even between the Danes and Swedes; but it is only that which divided the two nations whom one island bred, and who seemed more animated against each other for the very reason, that our narrative is principally concerned with.

Of all the English nobles who had followed their king to Palestine, De Vaux was most prejudiced against the Scottish; they were his near neighbours, with whom he had been engaged during his whole life in private or public warfare, and on whom he had inflicted many calamities, while he had sustained at their hands not a few. His love and devotion to the King was like the vivid affection of the old English mastiff to his master, leaving him churlish and inaccessible to all others, even towards those to whom he was indifferent, and rough and dangerous to any against whom he entertained a prejudice. De Vaux had never observed, without jealousy and displeasure, his King exhibit any mark of courtesy or favour to the wicked, deceitful, and ferocious race, born on the other side of a river, or an imaginary line drawn through waste and wilderness, and he even doubted the success of a Crusade in which they were suffered to bear arms, holding them in his secret soul little better than the Saracens, whom he came to combat. It may be added that, as being himself a blunt and downright Englishman, unaccustomed to conceal the slightest movement either of love or of dislike, he accounted the fair-spoken courtesy which

the Scots had learned, either from imitation of their frequent allies, the French, or which might have arisen from their own proud and reserved character, as a false and astucious mark of the most dangerous designs against their neighbours, over whom he believed, with genuine English confidence, they could, by fair manhood, never obtain any advantage.

Yet, though De Vaux entertained these sentiments concerning his northern neighbours, and extended them, with little mitigation, even to such as had assumed the cross, his respect for the King, and a sense of the duty imposed by his vow as a Crusader, prevented him from displaying them otherwise than by regularly shunning all intercourse with his Scottish brethren-at-arms, as far as possible, by observing a sullen taciturnity when compelled to meet them occasionally, and by looking scornfully upon them when they encountered on the march and in camp. The Scottish barons and knights were not men to bear his scorn unobserved or unreplied to; and it came to that pass, that he was regarded as the determined and active enemy of a nation whom, after all, he only disliked, and in some sort despised. Nay, it was remarked by close observers that, if he had not towards them the charity of Scripture, which suffereth long and judges kindly, he was by no means deficient in the subordinate and limited virtue which alleviates and relieves the wants of others. The wealth of Thomas of Gilsland procured supplies of provisions and medicines, and some of these usually flowed by secret channels into the quarters of the Scottish; his surly benevolence proceeding on the principle that, next to a man's friend, his foe was of most importance to him, passing over all the intermediate relations, as too indifferent to merit even a thought. This explanation is necessary, in order that the reader may fully understand what we are now to detail.

Thomas de Vaux had not made many steps beyond the entrance of the royal pavilion, when he was aware of what the far more acute ear of the English monarch, no mean proficient in the art of minstrelsy, had instantly discovered, that the musical strains, namely, which had reached their ears, were produced by the pipes, shalms, and kettledrums of the Saracens; and at the bottom of an avenue of tents, which formed a broad access to the pavilion of Richard, he could see a crowd of idle soldiers assembled around the spot from which the music was heard, almost in the centre of the camp; and he saw, with great surprise, mingled amid the helmets of various

forms worn by the Crusaders of different nations, white turbans and long pikes, announcing the presence of armed Saracens, and the huge deformed heads of several camels or dromedaries, overlooking the multitude by aid of their long, disproportioned necks.

Wondering and displeased at a sight so unexpected and singular — for it was customary to leave all flags of truce and other communications from the enemy at an appointed place without the barriers — the baron looked eagerly round for some one of whom he might inquire the cause of this alarming novelty.

The first person whom he met advancing to him, he set down at once, by his grave and haughty step, as a Spaniard or a Scot; and presently after muttered to himself — 'And a Scot it is — he of the Leopard. I have seen him fight indifferently well, for one of his country.'

Loth to ask even a passing question, he was about to pass Sir Kenneth, with that sullen and lowering port which seems to say, 'I know thee, but I will hold no communication with thee'; but his purpose was defeated by the Northern knight, who moved forward directly to him, and accosting him with formal courtesy, said, 'My Lord de Vaux of Gilsland, I have in charge to speak with you.'

'Ha!' returned the English baron, 'with me? But say your pleasure, so it be shortly spoken; I am on the King's errand.'

'Mine touches King Richard yet more nearly,' answered Sir Kenneth; 'I bring him, I trust, health.'

The Lord of Gilsland measured the Scot with incredulous eyes, and replied, 'Thou art no leech, I think, sir Scot; I had as soon thought of your bringing the King of England wealth.'

Sir Kenneth, though displeased with the manner of the baron's reply, answered calmly — 'Health to Richard is glory and wealth to Christendom. But my time presses; I pray you, may I see the King?'

'Surely not, fair sir,' said the baron, 'until your errand be told more distinctly. The sick-chambers of princes open not to all who inquire, like a Northern hostelry.'

'My lord,' said Kenneth, 'the cross which I wear in common with yourself, and the importance of what I have to tell, must, for the present, cause me to pass over a bearing which else I were unapt to endure. In plain language, then, I bring with me a Moorish physician, who undertakes to work a cure on King Richard.'

'A Moorish physician!' said De Vaux; 'and who will warrant that he brings not poisons instead of remedies?'

'His own life, my lord — his head, which he offers as a guarantee.'

'I have known many a resolute ruffian,' said De Vaux, 'who valued his own life as little as it deserved, and would troop to the gallows as merrily as if the hangman were his partner in a dance.'

'But thus it is, my lord,' replied the Scot: 'Saladin, to whom none will deny the credit of a generous and valiant enemy, hath sent this leech hither with an honourable retinue and guard, befitting the high estimation in which El Hakim is held by the Soldan, and with fruits and refreshments for the King's private chamber, and such message as may pass betwixt honourable enemies, praying him to be recovered of his fever, that he may be the fitter to receive a visit from the Soldan, with his naked scimitar in his hand, and an hundred thousand cavaliers at his back. Will it please you, who are of the King's secret council, to cause these camels to be discharged of their burdens, and some order taken as to the reception of the learned physician?'

'Wonderful!' said De Vaux, as speaking to himself. 'And who will vouch for the honour of Saladin, in a case when bad faith would rid him at once of his most powerful adversary?'

'I myself,' replied Sir Kenneth, 'will be his guarantee, with honour, life, and fortune.'

'Strange!' again ejaculated De Vaux: 'the North vouches for the South — the Scot for the Turk! May I crave of you, sir knight, how you became concerned in this affair?'

'I had been absent on a pilgrimage, in the course of which,' replied Sir Kenneth, 'I had a message to discharge towards the holy hermit of Engaddi.'

'May I not be entrusted with it, Sir Kenneth, and with the answer of the holy man?'

'It may not be, my lord,' answered the Scot.

'I am of the secret council of England,' said the Englishman, haughtily.

'To which land I owe no allegiance,' said Kenneth. 'Though I have voluntarily followed in this war the personal fortunes of England's sovereign, I was despatched by the general council of the kings, princes, and supreme leaders of the army of the Blessed Cross, and to them only I render my errand.'

'Ha! say'st thou?' said the proud Baron de Vaux. 'But

know, messenger of the kings and princes as thou mayst be, no leech shall approach the sick-bed of Richard of England without the consent of him of Gilsland; and they will come on evil errand who dare to intrude themselves against it.'

He was turning loftily away, when the Scot, placing himself closer, and more opposite to him, asked, in a calm voice, yet not without expressing his share of pride, whether the Lord of Gilsland esteemed him a gentleman and a good knight.

'All Scots are ennobled by their birthright,' answered Thomas de Vaux, something ironically; but, sensible of his own injustice, and perceiving that Kenneth's colour rose, he added, 'For a good knight it were sin to doubt you, in one at least who has seen you well and bravely discharge your devoir.'

'Well, then,' said the Scottish knight, satisfied with the frankness of the last admission, 'and let me swear to you, Thomas of Gilsland, that as I am true Scottish man, which I hold a privilege equal to my ancient gentry, and as sure as I am a belted knight, and come hither to acquire *los* and fame in this mortal life, and forgiveness of my sins in that which is to come, so truly, and by the blessed cross which I wear, do I protest unto you, that I desire but the safety of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, in recommending the ministry of this Moslem physician.'

The Englishman was struck with the solemnity of the obtestation, and answered with more cordiality than he had yet exhibited, 'Tell me, Sir Knight of the Leopard, granting — which I do not doubt — that thou art thyself satisfied in this matter, shall I do well, in a land where the art of poisoning is as general as that of cooking, to bring this unknown physician to practise with his drugs on a health so valuable to Christendom?'

'My lord,' replied the Scot, 'thus only can I reply, that my squire, the only one of my retinue whom war and disease had left in attendance on me, has been of late suffering dangerously under this same fever which, in valiant King Richard, has disabled the principal limb of our holy enterprise. This leech, this El Hakim, hath ministered remedies to him not two hours since, and already he hath fallen into a refreshing sleep. That he *can* cure the disorder, which has proved so fatal, I nothing doubt; that he hath the purpose to do it is, I think, warranted by his mission from the royal Soldan, who is true-hearted and loyal, so far as a blinded infidel may be called so; and, for his eventual success, the certainty of reward in case of

succeeding, and punishment in case of voluntary failure, may be a sufficient guarantee.'

The Englishman listened with downcast looks, as one who doubted, yet was not unwilling to receive conviction. At length he looked up and said, 'May I see your sick squire, fair sir?'

The Scottish knight hesitated and coloured, yet answered at last, 'Willingly, my Lord of Gilsland; but you must remember, when you see my poor quarter, that the nobles and knights of Scotland feed not so high, sleep not so soft, and care not for the magnificence of lodgment which is proper to their southern neighbours. I am *poorly* lodged, my Lord of Gilsland,' he added, with a haughty emphasis on the word, while, with some unwillingness, he led the way to his temporary place of abode.

Whatever were the prejudices of De Vaux against the nation of his new acquaintance, and though we undertake not to deny that some of these were excited by its proverbial poverty, he had too much nobleness of disposition to enjoy the mortification of a brave individual, thus compelled to make known wants which his pride would gladly have concealed.

'Shame to the soldier of the Cross,' he said, 'who thinks of worldly splendour, or of luxurious accommodation, when pressing forward to the conquest of the Holy City. Fare as hard as we may, we shall yet be better than the host of martyrs and of saints, who, having trod these scenes before us, now hold golden lamps and evergreen palms.'

This was the most metaphorical speech which Thomas of Gilsland was ever known to utter, the rather, perhaps (as will sometimes happen), that it did not entirely express his own sentiments, being somewhat a lover of good cheer and splendid accommodation. By this time they reached the place of the camp, where the Knight of the Leopard had assumed his abode.

Appearances here did indeed promise no breach of the laws of mortification, to which the Crusaders, according to the opinion expressed by him of Gilsland, ought to subject themselves. A space of ground, large enough to accommodate perhaps thirty tents, according to the Crusaders' rules of castrametation, was partly vacant, because, in ostentation, the knight had demanded ground to the extent of his original retinue, partly occupied by a few miserable huts, hastily constructed of boughs and covered with palm leaves. These habitations seemed entirely deserted, and several of them were ruinous. The central hut, which represented the pavilion of

the leader, was distinguished by his swallow-tailed pennon, placed on the point of a spear, from which its long folds dropt motionless to the ground, as if sickening under the scorching rays of the Asiatic sun. But no pages or squires, not even a solitary warder, was placed by the emblem of feudal power and knightly degrees. If its reputation defended it not from insult, it had no other guard.

Sir Kenneth cast a melancholy look around him, but, suppressing his feelings, entered the hut, making a sign to the Baron of Gilsland to follow. He also cast around a glance of examination, which implied pity not altogether unmingled with contempt, to which, perhaps, it is as nearly akin as it is said to be to love. He then stooped his lofty crest, and entered a lowly hut, which his bulky form seemed almost entirely to fill.

The interior of the hut was chiefly occupied by two beds. One was empty, but composed of collected leaves, and spread with an antelope's hide. It seemed, from the articles of armour laid beside it, and from a crucifix of silver, carefully and reverentially disposed at the head, to be the couch of the knight himself. The other contained the invalid, of whom Sir Kenneth had spoken — a strong-built and harsh-featured man, past, as his looks betokened, the middle age of life. His couch was trimmed more softly than his master's, and it was plain that the more courtly garments of the latter, the loose robe, in which the knights showed themselves on pacific occasions, and the other little spare articles of dress and adornment, had been applied by Sir Kenneth to the accommodation of his sick domestic. In an outward part of the hut, which yet was within the range of the English baron's eye, a boy, rudely attired with buskins of deer's hide, a blue cap or bonnet, and a doublet, whose original finery was much tarnished, sat on his knees by a chafing-dish filled with charcoal, cooking upon a plate of iron the cakes of barley-bread which were then, and still are, a favourite food with the Scottish people. Part of an antelope was suspended against one of the main props of the hut, nor was it difficult to know how it had been procured; for a large stag greyhound, nobler in size and appearance than those even which guarded King Richard's sick-bed, lay eyeing the process of baking the cake. The sagacious animal, on their first entrance, uttered a stifled growl, which sounded from his deep chest like distant thunder. But he saw his master, and acknowledged his presence by wagging his tail and couching his head, abstaining from more

tumultuous or noisy greeting, as if his noble instinct had taught him the propriety of silence in a sick man's chamber.

Beside the couch, sat on a cushion, also composed of skins, the Moorish physician of whom Sir Kenneth had spoken, cross-legged, after the Eastern fashion. The imperfect light showed little of him, save that the lower part of his face was covered with a long black beard, which descended over his breast; that he wore a high *tolpack*, a Tartar cap of the lamb's-wool manufactured at Astracan, bearing the same dusky colour, and that his ample caftan, or Turkish robe, was also of a dark hue. Two piercing eyes, which gleamed with unusual lustre, were the only lineaments of his visage that could be discerned amid the darkness in which he was enveloped. The English lord stood silent with a sort of reverential awe; for, notwithstanding the roughness of his general bearing, a scene of distress and poverty, firmly endured without complaint or murmur, would at any time have claimed more reverence from Thomas de Vaux than would all the splendid formalities of a royal presence-chamber, unless that presence-chamber were King Richard's own. Nothing was, for a time, heard but the heavy and regular breathings of the invalid, who seemed in profound repose.

'He hath not slept for six nights before,' said Sir Kenneth, 'as I am assured by the youth, his attendant.'

'Noble Scot,' said Thomas de Vaux, grasping the Scottish knight's hand, with a pressure which had more of cordiality than he permitted his words to utter, 'this gear must be amended. Your esquire is but too evil fed and looked to.'

In the latter part of this speech he naturally raised his voice to its usual decided tone. The sick man was disturbed in his slumbers.

'My master,' he said, murmuring as in a dream — 'noble Sir Kenneth, taste not, to you as to me, the waters of the Clyde cold and refreshing, after the brackish springs of Palestine?'

'He dreams of his native land, and is happy in his slumbers,' whispered Sir Kenneth to De Vaux; but had scarce uttered the words, when the physician, arising from the place which he had taken near the couch of the sick, and laying the hand of the patient, whose pulse he had been carefully watching, quietly upon the couch, came to the two knights, and taking them each by the arm, while he intimated to them to remain silent, led them to the front of the hut.

'In the name of Issa ben Mariam,' he said, 'whom we

honour as you, though not with the same blinded superstition, disturb not the effect of the blessed medicine of which he hath partaken. To awaken him now is death or deprivation of reason; but return at the hour when the muezzin calls from the minaret to evening prayer in the mosque, and, if left undisturbed until then, I promise you, this same Frankish soldier shall be able, without prejudice to his health, to hold some brief converse with you, on any matters on which either, and especially his master, may have to question him.'

The knights retreated before the authoritative commands of the leech, who seemed fully to comprehend the importance of the Eastern proverb, that 'the sick-chamber of the patient is the kingdom of the physician.'

They paused, and remained standing together at the door of the hut, Sir Kenneth with the air of one who expected his visitor to say farewell, and De Vaux as if he had something on his mind which prevented him from doing so. The hound, however, had pressed out of the tent after them, and now thrust his long rough countenance into the hand of his master, as if modestly soliciting some mark of his kindness. He had no sooner received the notice which he desired, in the shape of a kind word and slight caress, than, eager to acknowledge his gratitude and joy for his master's return, he flew off at full speed, galloping in full career, and with outstretched tail, here and there, about and around, crossways and endlong, through the decayed huts and the esplanade we have described, but never transgressing those precincts which his sagacity knew were protected by his master's pennon. After a few gambols of this kind, the dog, coming close up to his master, laid at once aside his frolicsome mood, relapsed into his usual gravity and slowness of gesture and deportment, and looked as if he were ashamed that anything should have moved him to depart so far out of his sober self-control.

Both knights looked on with pleasure; for Sir Kenneth was justly proud of his noble hound, and the northern English baron was, of course, an admirer of the chase, and a judge of the animal's merits.

'A right able dog,' he said; 'I think, fair sir, King Richard hath not an alan which may match him, if he be as stanch as he is swift. But let me pray you — speaking in all honour and kindness — have you not heard the proclamation, that no one, under the rank of earl, shall keep hunting-dogs within King Richard's camp, without the royal license, which, I think, Sir Kenneth,

hath not been issued to you? I speak as Master of the Horse.'

'And I answer as a free Scottish knight,' said Kenneth, sternly. 'For the present I follow the banner of England, but I cannot remember that I have ever subjected myself to the forest laws of that kingdom, nor have I such respect for them as would incline me to do so. When the trumpet sounds to arms, my foot is in the stirrup as soon as any; when it clangs for the charge, my lance has not yet been the last laid in the rest. But for my hours of liberty or of idleness, King Richard has no title to bar my recreation.'

'Nevertheless,' said De Vaux, 'it is a folly to disobey the King's ordinance; so, with your good leave, I, as having authority in that matter, will send you a protection for my friend here.'

'I thank you,' said the Scot, coldly; 'but he knows my allotted quarters, and within these I can protect him myself. And yet,' he said, suddenly changing his manner, 'this is but a cold return for a well-meant kindness. I thank you, my lord, most heartily. The King's equerries, or prickers, might find Roswal at disadvantage, and do him some injury, which I should not, perhaps, be slow in returning, and so ill might come of it. You have seen so much of my housekeeping, my lord,' he added with a smile, 'that I need not shame to say that Roswal is our principal purveyor; and well I hope our Lion Richard will not be like the lion in the minstrel fable, that went a-hunting and kept the whole booty to himself. I cannot think he would grudge a poor gentleman, who follows him faithfully, his hour of sport and his morsel of game, more especially when other food is hard enough to come by.'

'By my faith, you do the King more than justice; and yet,' said the baron, 'there is something in these words, "vert" and "venison," that turns the very brains of our Norman princes.'

'We have heard of late,' said the Scot, 'by minstrels and pilgrims, that your outlawed yeomen have formed great bands in the shires of York and Nottingham, having at their head a most stout archer, called Robin Hood, with his lieutenant, Little John. Methinks it were better that Richard relaxed his forest code in England than endeavoured to enforce it in the Holy Land.'

'Wild work, Sir Kenneth,' replied De Vaux, shrugging his shoulders, as one who would avoid a perilous or unpleasing

topic—'a mad world, sir. I must now bid you adieu, having presently to return to the King's pavilion. At vespers, I will again, with your leave, visit your quarters, and speak with this same infidel physician. I would, in the meantime, were it no offence, willingly send you what would somewhat mend your cheer.'

'I thank you, sir,' said Sir Kenneth, 'but it needs not: Roswal hath already stocked my larder for two weeks, since the sun of Palestine, if it brings diseases, serves also to dry venison.'

The two warriors parted much better friends than they had met; but ere they separated, Thomas de Vaux informed himself at more length of the circumstances attending the mission of the Eastern physician, and received from the Scottish knight the credentials which he had brought to King Richard on the part of Saladin.

CHAPTER VIII

A wise physician, skill'd our wounds to heal,
Is more than armies to the common weal.

Pope's *Iliad.*

'THIS is a strange tale, Sir Thomas,' said the sick monarch, when he had heard the report of the trusty Baron of Gilsland; 'art thou sure this Scottish man is a loyal man and true?'

'I cannot say, my lord,' replied the jealous Borderer: 'I live a little too near the Scots to gather much truth among them, having found them ever fair and false. But this man's bearing is that of a true man, were he a devil as well as a Scot; that I must needs say for him in conscience.'

'And for his carriage as a knight, how say'st thou, De Vaux?' demanded the King.

'It is your Majesty's business more than mine to note men's bearings; and I warrant you have noted the manner in which this man of the Leopard hath borne himself. He hath been full well spoken of.'

'And justly, Thomas,' said the King. 'We have ourselves witnessed him. It is indeed our purpose, in placing ourselves ever in the front of battle, to see how our liegemen and followers acquit themselves, and not from a desire to accumulate vain glory to ourselves, as some have supposed. We know the vanity of the praise of man, which is but a vapour, and buckle on our armour for other purposes than to win it.'

De Vaux was alarmed when he heard the King make a declaration so inconsistent with his nature, and believed at first that nothing short of the approach of death could have brought him to speak in depreciating terms of military renown, which was the very breath of his nostrils. But, recollecting he had met the royal confessor in the outer pavilion, he was shrewd enough to place this temporary self-abasement to the effect of the reverend man's lesson, and suffered the King to proceed without reply.

'Yes,' continued Richard, 'I have indeed marked the manner in which this knight does his devoir. My leading-staff were not worth a fool's bauble, had he escaped my notice; and he had ere now tasted of our bounty, but that I have also marked his overweening and audacious presumption.'

'My liege,' said the Baron of Gilsland, observing the King's countenance change, 'I fear I have transgressed your pleasure in lending some countenance to his transgression.'

'How, De Multon, thou?' said the King, contracting his brows and speaking in a tone of angry surprise — 'thou countenance his insolence? It cannot be.'

'Nay, your Majesty will pardon me to remind you that I have by mine office right to grant liberty to men of gentle blood to keep them a hound or two within camp, just to cherish the noble art of venerie; and besides, it were a sin to have maimed or harmed a thing so noble as this gentleman's dog.'

'Has he then a dog so handsome?' said the King.

'A most perfect creature of Heaven,' said the baron, who was an enthusiast in field-sports, 'of the noblest Northern breed — deep in the chest, strong in the stern, black colour, and brindled on the breast and legs — not spotted with white, but just shaded into grey — strength to pull down a bull, swiftness to cote an antelope.'

The King laughed at his enthusiasm. 'Well, thou hast given him leave to keep the hound, so there is an end of it. Be not, however, liberal of your licenses among those knights adventurers who have no prince or leader to depend upon; they are ungovernable, and leave no game in Palestine. But to this piece of learned heathenesse — say'st thou the Scot met him in the desert?'

'No, my liege, the Scot's tale runs thus — He was despatched to the old hermit of Engaddi, of whom men talk so much ——'

''Sdeath and hell!' said Richard, starting up. 'By whom despatched and for what? Who dared send any one thither when our Queen was in the convent of Engaddi, upon her pilgrimage for our recovery?'

'The council of the Crusade sent him, my lord,' answered the Baron de Vaux; 'for what purpose he declined to account to me. I think it is scarce known in the camp that your royal consort is on a pilgrimage, and even the princes may not have been aware, as the Queen has been sequestered from company since your love prohibited her attendance in case of infection.'

'Well, it shall be looked into,' said Richard. 'So this Scottish man, this envoy, met with a wandering physician at the grotto of Engaddi — ha?'

'Not so, my liege,' replied De Vaux; 'but he met, I think, near that place with a Saracen emir with whom he had some mêlée in the way of proof of valour, and finding him worthy to bear brave men company, they went together, as errant knights are wont, to the grotto of Engaddi.'

Here De Vaux stopped, for he was not one of those who can tell a long story in a sentence.

'And did they there meet the physician?' demanded the King, impatiently.

'No, my liege,' replied De Vaux; 'but the Saracen, learning your Majesty's grievous illness, undertook that Saladin should send his own physician to you, and with many assurances of his eminent skill; and he came to the grotto accordingly, after the Scottish knight had tarried a day for him and more. He is attended as if he were a prince, with drums and atabals, and servants on horse and foot, and brings with him letters of credence from Saladin.'

'Have they been examined by Giacomo Loredani?'

'I showed them to the interpreter ere bringing them hither, and behold their contents in English.'

Richard took a scroll, in which were inscribed these words: 'The blessing of Allah and his Prophet Mohammed — ('Out upon the hound!' said Richard, spitting in contempt, by way of interjection) — Saladin, king of kings, soldan of Egypt and of Syria, the light and refuge of the earth, to the great Melech Ric — Richard of England — greeting. Whereas we have been informed that the hand of sickness hath been heavy upon thee, our royal brother, and that thou hast with thee only such Nazarene and Jewish mediciners as work without the blessing of Allah and our holy Prophet — ('Confusion on his head!' again muttered the English monarch) — we have therefore sent to tend and wait upon thee at this time the physician to our own person, Adonbec el Hakim, before whose face the angel Azrael[1] spreads his wings and departs from the sick-chamber: who knows the virtues of herbs and stones, the path of the sun, moon, and stars, and can save man from all that is not written on his forehead. And this we do, praying you heartily to honour and make use of his skill, not only that we may do service to thy worth and valour, which is the glory of all the

[1] The Angel of Death.

nations of Frangistan, but that we may bring the controversy which is at present between us to an end, either by honourable agreement or by open trial thereof with our weapons in a fair field; seeing that it neither becomes thy place and courage to die the death of a slave who hath been overwrought by his taskmaster, nor befits it our fame that a brave adversary be snatched from our weapon by such a disease. And, therefore, may the holy ——'

'Hold — hold,' said Richard, 'I will have no more of his dog of a Prophet! It makes me sick to think the valiant and worthy Soldan should believe in a dead dog. Yes, I will see his physician. I will put myself into the charge of this Hakim. I will repay the noble Soldan his generosity. I will meet Saladin in the field, as he so worthily proposes, and he shall have no cause to term Richard of England ungrateful. I will strike him to the earth with my battle-axe. I will convert him to Holy Church with such blows as he has rarely endured. He shall recant his errors before my good cross-handled sword, and I will have him baptized in the battle-field, from my own helmet, though the cleansing waters were mixed with the blood of us both. Haste, De Vaux, why dost thou delay a conclusion so pleasing? Fetch the Hakim hither.'

'My lord,' said the baron, who perhaps saw some accession of fever in this overflow of confidence, 'bethink you, the Soldan is a pagan, and that you are his most formidable enemy ——'

'For which reason he is the more bound to do me service in this matter, lest a paltry fever end the quarrel betwixt two such kings. I tell thee, he loves me as I love him — as noble adversaries ever love each other; by my honour, it were sin to doubt his good faith.'

'Nevertheless, my lord, it were well to wait the issue of these medicines upon the Scottish squire,' said the Lord of Gilsland; 'my own life depends upon it, for worthy were I to die like a dog, did I proceed rashly in this matter, and make shipwreck of the weal of Christendom.'

'I never knew thee before hesitate for fear of life,' said Richard, upbraidingly.

'Nor would I now, my liege,' replied the stout-hearted baron, 'save that yours lies at pledge as well as my own.'

'Well, thou suspicious mortal,' answered Richard, 'begone then, and watch the progress of this remedy. I could almost wish it might either cure or kill me, for I am weary of lying

here like an ox dying of the murrain, when tambours are beating, horses stamping, and trumpets sounding without.'

The baron hastily departed, resolved, however, to communicate his errand to some churchman, as he felt something burdened in conscience at the idea of his master being attended by an unbeliever.

The Archbishop of Tyre was the first to whom he confided his doubts, knowing his interest with his master, Richard, who both loved and honoured that sagacious prelate. The bishop heard the doubts which De Vaux stated with that acuteness of intelligence which distinguishes the Roman Catholic clergy. The religious scruples of De Vaux he treated with as much lightness as propriety permitted him to exhibit on such a subject to a layman.

'Mediciners,' he said, 'like the medicines which they employed, were often useful, though the one were by birth or manners the vilest of humanity, as the others are, in many cases, extracted from the basest materials. Men may use the assistance of pagans and infidels,' he continued, 'in their need, and there is reason to think that one cause of their being permitted to remain on earth is, that they might minister to the convenience of true Christians. Thus, we lawfully make slaves of heathen captives. Again,' proceeded the prelate, 'there is no doubt that the primitive Christians used the services of the unconverted heathen; thus, in the ship of Alexandria, in which the blessed Apostle Paul sailed to Italy, the sailors were doubtless pagans, yet what said the holy saint when their ministry was needful: "*Nisi hi in navi manserint, vos salvi fieri non potestis* — Unless these men abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Again, Jews are infidels to Christianity as well as Mohammedans. But there are few physicians in the camp excepting Jews, and such are employed without scandal or scruple. Therefore, Mohammedans may be used for their service in that capacity, *quod erat demonstrandum*.'

This reasoning entirely removed the scruples of Thomas de Vaux, who was particularly moved by the Latin quotation, as he did not understand a word of it.

But the bishop proceeded with far less fluency when he considered the possibility of the Saracen's acting with bad faith; and here he came not to a speedy decision. The baron showed him the letters of credence. He read and re-read them, and compared the original with the translation.

'It is a dish choicely cooked,' he said, 'to the palate of

King Richard, and I cannot but have my suspicions of the wily Saracen. They are curious in the art of poisons, and can so temper them that they shall be weeks in acting upon the party, during which time the perpetrator has leisure to escape. They can impregnate cloth and leather, nay, even paper and parchment, with the most subtle venom. Our Lady forgive me! and wherefore, knowing this, hold I these letters of credence so close to my face? Take them, Sir Thomas — take them speedily.'

Here he gave them at arm's-length, and with some appearance of haste, to the baron. 'But come, my Lord de Vaux,' he continued, 'wend we to the tent of this sick squire, where we shall learn whether this Hakim hath really the art of curing which he professeth, ere we consider whether there be safety in permitting him to exercise his art upon King Richard. Yet, hold! let me first take my pouncet-box, for these fevers spread like an infection. I would advise you to use dried rosemary steeped in vinegar, my lord. I, too, know something of the healing art.'

'I thank your reverend lordship,' replied Thomas of G[illegible] land; 'but had I been accessible to the fever, I had caught it long since by the bed of my master.'

The Bishop of Tyre blushed, for he had rather avoided the presence of the sick monarch; and he bid the baron lead on.

As they paused before the wretched hut in which Kenneth of the Leopard and his follower abode, the bishop said to De Vaux, 'Now, of a surety, my lord, these Scottish knights have worse care of their followers than we of our dogs. Here is a knight, valiant they say in battle, and thought fitting to be graced with charges of weight in time of truce, whose esquire of the body is lodged worse than in the worst dog-kennel in England. What say you of your neighbours?'

'That a master doth well enough for his servant, when he lodgeth him in no worse dwelling than his own,' said De Vaux, and entered the hut.

The bishop followed, not without evident reluctance; for though he lacked not courage in some respects, yet it was tempered with a strong and lively regard for his own safety. He recollected, however, the necessity there was for judging personally of the skill of the Arabian physician, and entered the hut with a stateliness of manner calculated, as he thought, to impose respect on the stranger.

The prelate was, indeed, a striking and commanding figure

In his youth he had been eminently handsome, and, even in age, was unwilling to appear less so. His episcopal dress was of the richest fashion, trimmed with costly fur, and surrounded by a cope of curious needlework. The rings on his fingers were worth a goodly barony, and the hood which he wore, though now unclasped and thrown back for heat, had studs of pure gold to fasten it around his throat and under his chin when he so inclined. His long beard, now silvered with age, descended over his breast. One of two youthful acolytes who attended him created an artificial shade, peculiar then to the East, by bearing over his head an umbrella of palmetto leaves, while the other refreshed his reverend master by agitating a fan of peacock-feathers.

When the Bishop of Tyre entered the hut of the Scottish knight, the master was absent; and the Moorish physician, whom he had come to see, sat in the very posture in which De Vaux had left him several hours before, cross-legged upon a mat made of twisted leaves, by the side of the patient, who appeared in deep slumber, and whose pulse he felt from time to time. The bishop remained standing before him in silence for two or three minutes, as if expecting some honourable salutation, or at least that the Saracen would seem struck with the dignity of his appearance. But Adonbec el Hakim took no notice of him beyond a passing glance, and when the prelate at length saluted him in the *lingua franca* current in the country, he only replied by the ordinary Oriental greeting, '*Salam alicum* — peace be with you.'

'Art thou a physician, infidel?' said the bishop, somewhat mortified at this cold reception. 'I would speak with thee on that art.'

'If thou knewest aught of medicine,' answered El Hakim, 'thou wouldst be aware that physicians hold no counsel or debate in the sick-chamber of their patient. Hear,' he added, as the low growling of the staghound was heard from the inner hut, 'even the dog might teach thee reason, *ulemat*. His instinct teaches him to suppress his barking in the sick man's hearing. Come without the tent,' said he, rising and leading the way, 'if thou hast aught to say with me.'

Notwithstanding the plainness of the Saracen leech's dress, and his inferiority of size, when contrasted with the tall prelate and gigantic English baron, there was something striking in his manner and countenance, which prevented the Bishop of Tyre from expressing strongly the displeasure he felt at this

unceremonious rebuke. When without the hut, he gazed upon Adonbec in silence for several minutes before he could fix on the best manner to renew the conversation. No locks were seen under the high bonnet of the Arabian, which hid also part of a brow that seemed lofty and expanded, smooth and free from wrinkles, as were his cheeks, where they were seen under the shade of his long beard. We have elsewhere noticed the piercing quality of his dark eyes.

The prelate, struck with his apparent youth, at length broke a pause which the other seemed in no haste to interrupt, by demanding of the Arabian how old he was.

'The years of ordinary men,' said the Saracen, 'are counted by their wrinkles, those of sages by their studies. I dare not call myself older than an hundred revolutions of the Hegira.'[1]

The Baron of Gilsland, who took this for a literal assertion that he was a century old, looked doubtfully upon the prelate, who, though he better understood the meaning of El Hakim, answered his glance by mysteriously shaking his head. He resumed an air of importance, when he again authoritatively demanded what evidence Adonbec could produce of his medical proficiency.

'Ye have the word of the mighty Saladin,' said the sage, touching his cap in sign of reverence, 'a word which was never broken towards friend or foe; what, Nazarene, wouldst thou demand more?'

'I would have ocular proof of thy skill,' said the baron, 'and without it thou approachest not to the couch of King Richard.'

'The praise of the physician,' said the Arabian, 'is in the recovery of his patient. Behold this sergeant, whose blood has been dried up by the fever which has whitened your camp with skeletons, and against which the art of your Nazarene leeches hath been like a silken doublet against a lance of steel. Look at his fingers and arms, wasted like the claws and shanks of the crane. Death had this morning his clutch on him; but had Azrael been on one side of the couch, I being on the other, his soul should not have been reft from his body. Disturb me not with farther questions, but await the critical minute, and behold in silent wonder the marvellous event.'

The physician had then recourse to his astrolabe, the oracle of Eastern science, and, watching with grave precision until the

[1] Meaning, that his attainments were those which might have been made in a hundred years.

precise time of the evening prayer had arrived, he sunk on his knees, with his face turned to Mecca, and recited the petitions which close the Moslemah's day of toil.

The bishop and the English baron looked on each other meanwhile with symptoms of contempt and indignation, but neither judged it fit to interrupt El Hakim in his devotions, unholy as they considered them to be.

The Arab arose from the earth, on which he had prostrated himself, and, walking into the hut where the patient lay extended, he drew a sponge from a small silver box, dipt perhaps in some aromatic distillation; for when he put it to the sleeper's nose, he sneezed, awoke, and looked wildly around. He was a ghastly spectacle, as he sat up almost naked on his couch, the bones and cartilages as visible through the surface of his skin as if they had never been clothed with flesh; his face was long, and furrowed with wrinkles, but his eye, though it wandered at first, became gradually more settled. He seemed to be aware of the presence of his dignified visitors, for he attempted feebly to pull the covering from his head, in token of reverence, as he inquired, in a subdued and submissive voice, for his master.

'Do you know us, vassal?' said the Lord of Gilsland.

'Not perfectly, my lord,' replied the squire, faintly. 'My sleep has been long and full of dreams. Yet I know that you are a great English lord, as seemeth by the red cross, and this a holy prelate, whose blessing I crave on me a poor sinner.'

'Thou hast it: *Benedictio Domini sit vobiscum*,' said the prelate, making the sign of the cross, but without approaching nearer to the patient's bed.

'Your eyes witness,' said the Arabian, 'the fever hath been subdued: he speaks with calmness and recollection, his pulse beats composedly as yours — try its pulsations yourself.'

The prelate declined the experiment; but Thomas of Gilsland, more determined on making the trial, did so, and satisfied himself that the fever was indeed gone.

'This is most wonderful,' said the knight, looking to the bishop: 'the man is assuredly cured. I must conduct this mediciner presently to King Richard's tent. What thinks your reverence?'

'Stay, let me finish one cure ere I commence another,' said the Arab; 'I will pass with you when I have given my patient the second cup of this most holy elixir.'

So saying, he pulled out a silver cup, and filling it with

water from a gourd which stood by the bedside, he next drew forth a small silken bag made of network, twisted with silver, the contents of which the bystanders could not discover, and immersing it in the cup, continued to watch it in silence during the space of five minutes. It seemed to the spectators as if some effervescence took place during the operation; but if so, it instantly subsided.

'Drink,' said the physician to the sick man; 'sleep, and awaken free from malady.'

'And with this simple-seeming draught thou wilt undertake to cure a monarch?' said the Bishop of Tyre.

'I have cured a beggar, as you may behold,' replied the sage. 'Are the kings of Frangistan made of other clay than the meanest of their subjects?'

'Let us have him presently to the King,' said the Baron of Gilsland. 'He hath shown that he possesses the secret which may restore his health. If he fails to exercise it, I will put himself past the power of medicine.'

As they were about to leave the hut, the sick man, raising his voice as much as his weakness permitted, exclaimed, 'Reverend father, noble knight, and you, kind leech, if you would have me sleep and recover, tell me in charity what is become of my dear master?'

'He is upon a distant expedition, friend,' replied the prelate — 'on an honourable embassy, which may detain him for some days.'

'Nay,' said the Baron of Gilsland, 'why deceive the poor fellow? Friend, thy master has returned to the camp, and you will presently see him.'

The invalid held up, as if in thankfulness, his wasted hands to heaven, and, resisting no longer the soporiferous operation of the elixir, sunk down in a gentle sleep.

'You are a better physician than I, Sir Thomas,' said the prelate: 'a soothing falsehood is fitter for a sick-room than an unpleasing truth.'

'How mean you, my reverend lord?' said De Vaux, hastily. 'Think you I would tell a falsehood to save the lives of a dozen such as he?'

'You said,' replied the bishop, with manifest symptoms of alarm — 'you said the esquire's master was returned — he, I mean, of the Couchant Leopard?'

'And he *is* returned,' said De Vaux. 'I spoke with him but a few hours since. This learned leech came in his company.'

'Holy Virgin! why told you not of his return to me?' said the bishop, in evident perturbation.

'Did I not say that this same Knight of the Leopard had returned in company with the physician? I thought I had,' replied De Vaux, carelessly; 'but what signified his return to the skill of the physician or the cure of his Majesty?'

'Much, Sir Thomas — it signified much,' said the bishop, clenching his hands, pressing his foot against the earth, and giving signs of impatience, as if in an involuntary manner. 'But where can he be gone now, this same knight? God be with us — here may be some fatal errors!'

'Yonder serf in the outer space,' said De Vaux, not without wonder at the bishop's emotion, 'can probably tell us whither his master has gone.'

The lad was summoned, and, in a language nearly incomprehensible to them, gave them at length to understand that an officer had summoned his master to the royal tent, some time before their arrival at that of his master. The anxiety of the bishop appeared to rise to the highest, and became evident to De Vaux, though neither an acute observer nor of a suspicious temper. But with his anxiety seemed to increase his wish to keep it subdued and unobserved. He took a hasty leave of De Vaux, who looked after him with astonishment; and, after shrugging up his shoulders in silent wonder, proceeded to conduct the Arabian physician to the tent of King Richard.

CHAPTER IX

This is the prince of leeches : fever, plague,
Cold rheum, and hot podagra, do but look on him,
And quit their grasp upon the tortured sinews.

Anonymous.

THE Baron of Gilsland walked with slow step and an anxious countenance towards the royal pavilion. He had much diffidence of his own capacity, except in a field of battle, and, conscious of no very acute intellect, was usually contented to wonder at circumstances which a man of livelier imagination would have endeavoured to investigate and understand, or at least would have made the subject of speculation. But it seemed very extraordinary, even to him, that the attention of the bishop should have been at once abstracted from all reflection on the marvellous cure which they had witnessed, and upon the probability it afforded of Richard being restored to health, by what seemed a very trivial piece of information, announcing the motions of a beggarly Scottish knight, than whom Thomas of Gilsland knew nothing within the circle of gentle blood more unimportant or contemptible ; and, despite his usual habit of passively beholding passing events, the baron's spirit toiled with unwonted attempts to form conjectures on the cause.

At length the idea occurred at once to him, that the whole might be a conspiracy against King Richard, formed within the camp of the allies, and to which the bishop, who was by some represented as a politic and unscrupulous person, was not unlikely to have been accessary. It was true that, in his own opinion, there existed no character so perfect as that of his master ; for Richard being the flower of chivalry, and the chief of Christian leaders, and obeying in all points the commands of Holy Church, De Vaux's ideas of perfection went no farther. Still he knew that, however unworthily, it had been always his master's fate to draw as much reproach and dislike as honour

and attachment from the display of his great qualities; and that in the very camp, and amongst those princes bound by oath to the Crusade, were many who would have sacrificed all hope of victory over the Saracens to the pleasure of ruining, or at least of humbling, Richard of England.

'Wherefore,' said the baron to himself, 'it is in no sense impossible that this El Hakim, with this his cure, or seeming cure, wrought on the body of the Scottish squire, may mean nothing but a trick, to which he of the Leopard may be accessary, and wherein the Bishop of Tyre, prelate as he is, may have some share.'

This hypothesis, indeed, could not be so easily reconciled with the alarm manifested by the bishop, on learning that, contrary to his expectation, the Scottish knight had suddenly returned to the Crusaders' camp. But De Vaux was influenced only by his general prejudices, which dictated to him the assured belief that a wily Italian priest, a false-hearted Scot, and an infidel physician formed a set of ingredients from which all evil, and no good, was likely to be extracted. He resolved, however, to lay his scruples bluntly before the King, of whose judgment he had nearly as high an opinion as of his valour.

Meantime, events had taken place very contrary to the suppositions which Thomas de Vaux had entertained. Scarce had he left the royal pavilion, when, betwixt the impatience of the fever and that which was natural to his disposition, Richard began to murmur at his delay, and express an earnest desire for his return. He had seen enough to try to reason himself out of this irritation, which greatly increased his bodily malady. He wearied his attendants by demanding from them amusements, and the breviary of the priest, the romance of the clerk, even the harp of his favourite minstrel, were had recourse to in vain. At length, some two hours before sundown, and long, therefore, ere he could expect a satisfactory account of the process of the cure which the Moor or Arabian had undertaken, he sent, as we have already heard, a messenger commanding the attendance of the Knight of the Leopard, determined to soothe his impatience by obtaining from Sir Kenneth a more particular account of the cause of his absence from the camp, and the circumstances of his meeting with this celebrated physician.

The Scottish knight, thus summoned, entered the royal presence as one who was no stranger to such scenes. He was scarcely known to the King of England, even by sight, although, tenacious of his rank, as devout in the adoration of the lady of

his secret heart, he had never been absent on those occasions when the munificence and hospitality of England opened the court of its monarch to all who held a certain rank in chivalry. The King gazed fixedly on Sir Kenneth approaching his bedside, while the knight bent his knee for a moment, then arose and stood before him, as became an officer in the presence of his sovereign, in a posture of deference, but not of subservience or humility.

'Thy name,' said the King, 'is Kenneth of the Leopard. From whom hadst thou degree of knighthood?'

'I took it from the sword of William the Lion, King of Scotland,' replied the Scot.

'A weapon,' said the King, 'well worthy to confer honour, nor has it been laid on an undeserving shoulder. We have seen thee bear thyself knightly and valiantly in press of battle, when most need there was; and thou hadst not been yet to learn that thy deserts were known to us, but that thy presumption in other points has been such that thy services can challenge no better reward than that of pardon for thy transgression. What sayst thou — ha?'

Kenneth attempted to speak, but was unable to express himself distinctly, the consciousness of his too ambitious love, and the keen falcon glance with which Cœur-de-Lion seemed to penetrate his inmost soul, combining to disconcert him.

'And yet,' said the King, 'although soldiers should obey command, and vassals be respectful towards their superiors, we might forgive a brave knight greater offence than the keeping a simple hound, though it were contrary to our express public ordinance.'

Richard kept his eye fixed on the Scot's face, beheld, and beholding smiled inwardly at, the relief produced by the turn he had given to his general accusation.

'So please you, my lord,' said the Scot, 'your Majesty must be good to us poor gentlemen of Scotland in this matter. We are far from home, scant of revenues, and cannot support ourselves as your wealthy nobles, who have credit of the Lombards. The Saracens shall feel our blows the harder that we eat a piece of dried venison from time to time with our herbs and barley-cakes.'

'It skills not asking my leave,' said Richard, 'since Thomas de Vaux, who doth, like all around me, that which is fittest in his own eyes, hath already given thee permission for hunting and hawking.'

'For hunting only, and please you,' said the Scot; 'but, if it please your Majesty to indulge me with the privilege of hawking also, and you list to trust me with a falcon on fist, I trust I could supply your royal mess with some choice water-fowl.'

'I dread me, if thou hadst but the falcon,' said the King, 'thou wouldst scarce wait for the permission. I wot well it is said abroad that we of the line of Anjou resent offence against our forest laws as highly as we would do treason against our crown. To brave and worthy men, however, we could pardon either misdemeanour. But enough of this. I desire to know of you, sir knight, wherefore, and by whose authority, you took this recent journey to the wilderness of the Dead Sea and Engaddi?'

'By order,' replied the knight, 'of the council of the princes of the holy Crusade.'

'And how dared any one to give such an order, when I — not the least, surely, in the league — was unacquainted with it?'

'It was not my part, please your Highness,' said the Scot, 'to inquire into such particulars. I am a soldier of the Cross — serving, doubtless, for the present, under your Highness's banner, and proud of the permission to do so; but still one who hath taken on him the holy symbol for the rights of Christianity, and the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre, and bound, therefore, to obey, without question, the orders of the princes and chiefs by whom the blessed enterprise is directed. That indisposition should seclude, I trust but for a short time, your Highness from their councils, in which you hold so potential a voice, I must lament with all Christendom; but, as a soldier, I must obey those on whom the lawful right of command devolves, or set but an evil example in the Christian camp.'

'Thou say'st well,' said King Richard; 'and the blame rests not with thee, but with those with whom, when it shall please Heaven to raise me from this accursed bed of pain and inactivity, I hope to reckon roundly. What was the purport of thy message?'

'Methinks, and please your Highness,' replied Sir Kenneth, 'that were best asked of those who sent me, and who can render the reasons of mine errand; whereas, I can only tell its outward form and purport.'

'Palter not with me, sir Scot; it were ill for thy safety,' said the irritable monarch.

'My safety, my lord,' replied the knight, firmly, 'I cast behind me as a regardless thing when I vowed myself to this

enterprise, looking rather to my immortal welfare than to that which concerns my earthly body.'

'By the mass,' said King Richard, 'thou art a brave fellow! Hark thee, sir knight, I love the Scottish people: they are hardy, though dogged and stubborn, and, I think, true men in the main, though the necessity of state has sometimes constrained them to be dissemblers. I deserve some love at their hand, for I have voluntarily done what they could not by arms have extorted from me, any more than from my predecessors: I have re-established the fortresses of Roxburgh and Berwick, which lay in pledge to England; I have restored your ancient boundaries; and, finally, I have renounced a claim to homage upon the crown of England, which I thought unjustly forced on you. I have endeavoured to make honourable and independent friends, where former kings of England attempted only to compel unwilling and rebellious vassals.'

'All this you have done, my Lord King,' said Sir Kenneth, bowing — 'all this you have done, by your royal treaty with our sovereign at Canterbury. Therefore have you me, and many better Scottish men, making war against the infidels, under your banners, who would else have been ravaging your frontiers in England. If their numbers are now few, it is because their lives have been freely waged and wasted.'

'I grant it true,' said the King; 'and for the good offices I have done your land, I require you to remember that, as a principal member of the Christian league, I have a right to know the negotiations of my confederates. Do me, therefore, the justice to tell me what I have a title to be acquainted with, and which I am certain to know more truly from you than from others.'

'My lord,' said the Scot, 'thus conjured, I will speak the truth; for I well believe that your purposes towards the principal object of our expedition are single-hearted and honest, and it is more than I dare warrant for others of the Holy League. Be pleased, therefore, to know, my charge was to propose, through the medium of the hermit of Engaddi, a holy man, respected and protected by Saladin himself ——'

'A continuation of the truce, I doubt not,' said Richard, hastily interrupting him.

'No, by St. Andrew, my liege,' said the Scottish knight; 'but the establishment of a lasting peace, and the withdrawing our armies from Palestine.'

'St. George!' said Richard, in astonishment. 'Ill as I have

justly thought of them, I could not have dreamed they would have humbled themselves to such dishonour. Speak, Sir Kenneth, with what will did you carry such a message?'

'With right good will, my lord,' said Kenneth; 'because, when we had lost our noble leader, under whose guidance alone I hoped for victory, I saw none who could succeed him likely to lead us to conquest, and I accounted it well in such circumstances to avoid defeat.'

'And on what conditions was this hopeful peace to be contracted?' said King Richard, painfully suppressing the passion with which his heart was almost bursting.

'These were not entrusted to me, my lord,' answered the Knight of the Couchant Leopard. 'I delivered them sealed to the hermit.'

'And for what hold you this reverend hermit — for fool, madman, traitor, or saint?' said Richard.

'His folly, sire,' replied the shrewd Scottishman, 'I hold to be assumed to win favour and reverence from the Paynimrie, who regard madmen as the inspired of Heaven; at least it seemed to me as exhibited only occasionally, and not as mixing, like natural folly, with the general tenor of his mind.'

'Shrewdly replied,' said the monarch, throwing himself back on his couch, from which he had half-raised himself. 'Now of his penitence?'

'His penitence,' continued Kenneth, 'appears to me sincere, and the fruits of remorse for some dreadful crime, for which he seems, in his own opinion, condemned to reprobation.'

'And for his policy?' said King Richard.

'Methinks, my lord,' said the Scottish knight, 'he despairs of the security of Palestine, as of his own salvation, by any means short of a miracle — at least, since the arm of Richard of England hath ceased to strike for it.'

'And therefore the coward policy of this hermit is like that of these miserable princes, who, forgetful of their knighthood and their faith, are only resolved and determined when the question is retreat, and, rather than go forward against an armed Saracen, would trample in their flight over a dying ally.'

'Might I so far presume, my Lord King,' said the Scottish knight, 'this discourse but heals your disease, the enemy from which Christendom dreads more evil than from armed hosts of infidels.'

The countenance of King Richard was, indeed, more flushed,

and his action became more feverishly vehement, as, with clenched hand, expanded arm, and flashing eyes he seemed at once to suffer under bodily pain and at the same time under vexation of mind, while his high spirit led him to speak on, as if in contempt of both.

'You can flatter, sir knight,' he said, 'but you escape me not. I must know more from you than you have yet told me. Saw you my royal consort when at Engaddi?'

'To my knowledge — no, my lord,' replied Sir Kenneth, with considerable perturbation; for he remembered the midnight procession in the chapel of the rocks.

'I ask you,' said the King, in a sterner voice, 'whether you were not in the chapel of the Carmelite nuns at Engaddi, and there saw Berengaria, Queen of England, and the ladies of her court, who went thither on pilgrimage?'

'My lord,' said Sir Kenneth, 'I will speak the truth as in the confessional. In a subterranean chapel, to which the anchorite conducted me, I beheld a choir of ladies do homage to a relic of the highest sanctity; but as I saw not their faces, nor heard their voices, unless in the hymns which they chanted, I cannot tell whether the Queen of England was of the bevy.'

'And was there no one of these ladies known to you?'

Sir Kenneth stood silent.

'I ask you,' said Richard, raising himself on his elbow, 'as a knight and a gentleman — and I shall know by your answer how you value either character — did you, or did you not, know any lady amongst that band of worshippers?'

'My lord,' said Kenneth, not without much hesitation, 'I might guess.'

'And I also may guess,' said the King, frowning sternly; 'but it is enough. Leopard as you are, sir knight, beware tempting the lion's paw. Harkye, to become enamoured of the moon would be but an act of folly; but to leap from the battlements of a lofty tower, in the wild hope of coming within her sphere, were self-destructive madness.'

At this moment some bustling was heard in the outer apartment, and the King, hastily changing to his more natural manner, said, 'Enough — begone — speed to De Vaux, and send him hither with the Arabian physician. My life for the faith of the Soldan! Would he but abjure his false law, I would aid him with my sword to drive this scum of French and Austrians from his dominions, and think Palestine as well ruled

by him as when her kings were anointed by the decree of Heaven itself.'

The Knight of the Leopard retired, and presently afterwards the chamberlain announced a deputation from the council, who had come to wait on the Majesty of England.

'It is well they allow that I am living yet,' was his reply 'Who are the reverend ambassadors?'

'The Grand Master of the Templars and the Marquis of Montserrat.'

'Our brother of France loves not sick-beds,' said Richard; 'yet, had Philip been ill, I had stood by his couch long since. Josceline, lay me the couch more fairly, it is tumbled like a stormy sea; reach me yonder steel mirror; pass a comb through my hair and beard — they look, indeed, liker a lion's mane than a Christian man's locks; bring water.'

'My lord,' said the trembling chamberlain, 'the leeches say that cold water may be fatal.'

'To the foul fiend with the leeches!' replied the monarch; 'if they cannot cure me, think you I will allow them to torment me? There, then,' he said, after having made his ablutions, 'admit the worshipful envoys; they will now, I think, scarcely see that disease has made Richard negligent of his person.'

The celebrated Master of the Templars was a tall, thin, war-worn man, with a slow yet penetrating eye, and a brow on which a thousand dark intrigues had stamped a portion of their obscurity. At the head of that singular body, to whom their order was everything and their individuality nothing; seeking the advancement of its power, even at the hazard of that very religion which the fraternity were originally associated to protect; accused of heresy and witchcraft, although by their character Christian priests; suspected of secret league with the Soldan, though by oath devoted to the protection of the Holy Temple or its recovery — the whole order, and the whole personal character of its commander, or Grand Master, was a riddle, at the exposition of which most men shuddered. The Grand Master was dressed in his white robes of solemnity, and he bare the abacus, a mystic staff of office, the peculiar form of which has given rise to such singular conjectures and commentaries, leading to suspicions that this celebrated fraternity of Christian knights were embodied under the foulest symbols of paganism.

Conrade of Montserrat had a much more pleasing exterior

than the dark and mysterious priest-soldier by whom he was accompanied. He was a handsome man, of middle age, or something past that term, bold in the field, sagacious in council, gay and gallant in times of festivity; but, on the other hand, he was generally accused of versatility, of a narrow and selfish ambition, of a desire to extend his own principality, without regard to the weal of the Latin kingdom of Palestine, and of seeking his own interest, by private negotiations with Saladin, to the prejudice of the Christian leaguers.

When the usual salutations had been made by these dignitaries, and courteously returned by King Richard, the Marquis of Montserrat commenced an explanation of the motives of their visit, sent, as he said they were, by the anxious kings and princes who composed the council of the Crusaders, 'to inquire into the health of their magnanimous ally, the valiant King of England.'

'We know the importance in which the princes of the council hold our health,' replied the English king; 'and are well aware how much they must have suffered by suppressing all curiosity concerning it for fourteen days, for fear, doubtless, of aggravating our disorder, by showing their anxiety regarding the event.'

The flow of the Marquis's eloquence being checked, and he himself thrown into some confusion by this reply, his more austere companion took up the thread of the conversation, and, with as much dry and brief gravity as was consistent with the presence which he addressed, informed the King that they came from the council, to pray, in the name of Christendom, 'that he would not suffer his health to be tampered with by an infidel physician, said to be despatched by Saladin, until the council had taken measures to remove or confirm the suspicion which they at present conceived did attach itself to the mission of such a person.'

'Grand Master of the Holy and Valiant Order of Knights Templars, and you, Most Noble Marquis of Montserrat,' replied Richard, 'if it please you to retire into the adjoining pavilion, you shall presently see what account we make of the tender remonstrances of our royal and princely colleagues in this religious warfare.'

The Marquis and Grand Master retired accordingly; nor had they been many minutes in the outward pavilion when the Eastern physician arrived, accompanied by the Baron of Gilsland and Kenneth of Scotland. The baron, however, was a

little later of entering the tent than the other two, stopping, perchance, to issue some orders to the warders without.

As the Arabian physician entered, he made his obeisance, after the Oriental fashion, to the Marquis and Grand Master, whose dignity was apparent, both from their appearance and their bearing. The Grand Master returned the salutation with an expression of disdainful coldness, the Marquis with the popular courtesy which he habitually practised to men of every rank and nation. There was a pause; for the Scottish knight, waiting for the arrival of De Vaux, presumed not, of his own authority, to enter the tent of the King of England, and, during this interval, the Grand Master sternly demanded of the Moslem, 'Infidel, hast thou the courage to practise thine art upon the person of an anointed sovereign of the Christian host?'

'The sun of Allah,' answered the sage, 'shines on the Nazarene as well as on the true believer, and His servant dare make no distinction betwixt them, when called on to exercise the art of healing.'

'Misbelieving Hakim,' said the Grand Master, 'or whatsoever they call thee for an unbaptized slave of darkness, dost thou well know that thou shalt be torn asunder by wild horses should King Richard die under thy charge?'

'That were hard justice,' answered the physician, 'seeing that I can but use human means, and that the issue is written in the book of light.'

'Nay, reverend and valiant Grand Master,' said the Marquis of Montserrat, 'consider that this learned man is not acquainted with our Christian order, adopted in the fear of God, and for the safety of His anointed. Be it known to thee, grave physician, whose skill we doubt not, that your wisest course is to repair to the presence of the illustrious council of our Holy League, and there to give account and reckoning to such wise and learned leeches as they shall nominate, concerning your means of process and cure of this illustrious patient; so shall you escape all the danger, which, rashly taking such a high matter upon your sole answer, you may else most likely incur.'

'My lords,' said El Hakim, 'I understand you well. But knowledge hath its champions as well as your military art, nay, hath sometimes had its martyrs as well as religion. I have the command of my sovereign, the Soldan Saladin, to heal this Nazarene king, and, with the blessing of the Prophet, I will obey his commands. If I fail, ye wear swords thirsting for the

blood of the faithful, and I proffer my body to your weapons. But I will not reason with one uncircumcised upon the virtue of the medicines of which I have obtained knowledge through the grace of the Prophet, and I pray you interpose no delay between me and my office.'

'Who talks of delay?' said the Baron de Vaux, hastily entering the tent; 'we have had but too much already. I salute you, my Lord of Montserrat, and you, valiant Grand Master. But I must presently pass with this learned physician to the bedside of my master.'

'My lord,' said the Marquis, in Norman-French, or the language of Oui, as it was then called, 'are you well advised that we came to expostulate, on the part of the council of the monarchs and princes of the Crusade, against the risk of permitting an infidel and Eastern physician to tamper with a health so valuable as that of your master King Richard?'

'Noble Lord Marquis,' replied the Englishman, bluntly, 'I can neither use many words nor do I delight in listening to them, moreover, I am much more ready to believe what my eyes have seen than what my ears have heard. I am satisfied that this heathen can cure the sickness of King Richard, and I believe and trust he will labour to do so. Time is precious. If Mohammed — may God's curse be on him! — stood at the door of the tent, with such fair purpose as this Adonbec el Hakim entertains, I would hold it sin to delay him for a minute. So, give ye gode'n, my lords.'

'Nay, but,' said Conrade of Montserrat, 'the King himself said we should be present when this same physician dealt upon him.'

The baron whispered the chamberlain, probably to know whether the Marquis spoke truly, and then replied, 'My lords, if you will hold your patience, you are welcome to enter with us; but if you interrupt, by action or threat, this accomplished physician in his duty, be it known that, without respect to your high quality, I will enforce your absence from Richard's tent; for know, I am so well satisfied of the virtue of this man's medicines, that were Richard himself to refuse them, by Our Lady of Lanercost, I think I could find in my heart to force him to take the means of his cure whether he would or no. Move on, El Hakim.'

The last word was spoken in the *lingua franca*, and instantly obeyed by the physician. The Grand Master looked grimly on the unceremonious old soldier, but, on exchanging a glance

with the Marquis, smoothed his frowning brow as well as he could, and both followed De Vaux and the Arabian into the inner tent, where Richard lay expecting them with that impatience with which the sick man watches the step of his physician. Sir Kenneth, whose attendance seemed neither asked nor prohibited, felt himself, by the circumstances in which he stood, entitled to follow these high dignitaries, but, conscious of his inferior power and rank, remained aloof during the scene which took place.

Richard, when they entered his apartment, immediately exclaimed, 'So ho! a goodly fellowship come to see Richard take his leap in the dark. My noble allies, I greet you as the representatives of our assembled league; Richard will again be amongst you in his former fashion, or ye shall bear to the grave what is left of him. De Vaux, lives he or dies he, thou hast the thanks of thy prince. There is yet another — but this fever hath wasted my eyesight. What, the bold Scot, who would climb Heaven without a ladder? He is welcome too. Come, sir Hakim, to the work — to the work.'

The physician, who had already informed himself of the various symptoms of the King's illness, now felt his pulse for a long time, and with deep attention, while all around stood silent and in breathless expectation. The sage next filled a cup with spring water, and dipt into it the small red purse, which, as formerly, he took from his bosom. When he seemed to think it sufficiently medicated, he was about to offer it to the sovereign, who prevented him, by saying, 'Hold an instant. Thou hast felt my pulse, let me lay my finger on thine. I too, as becomes a good knight, know something of thine art.'

The Arabian yielded his hand without hesitation, and his long slender dark fingers were, for an instant, inclosed, and almost buried, in the large enfoldment of King Richard's hand.

'His blood beats calm as an infant's,' said the King; 'so throb not theirs who poison princes. De Vaux, whether we live or die, dismiss this Hakim with honour and safety. Commend us, friend, to the noble Saladin. Should I die, it is without doubt of his faith; should I live, it will be to thank him as a warrior would desire to be thanked.'

He then raised himself in bed, took the cup in his hand, and, turning to the Marquis and the Grand Master — 'Mark what I say, and let my royal brethren pledge me in Cyprus wine — "To the immortal honour of the first Crusader who shall strike lance or sword on the gate of Jerusalem; and to

the shame and eternal infamy of whomsoever shall turn back from the plough on which he hath laid his hand!"'

He drained the cup to the bottom, resigned it to the Arabian, and sunk back, as if exhausted, upon the cushions which were arranged to receive him. The physician, then, with silent but expressive signs, directed that all should leave the tent excepting himself and De Vaux, whom no remonstrance could induce to withdraw. The apartment was cleared accordingly.

CHAPTER X

And now I will unclasp a secret book,
And, to your quick-conceiving discontent,
I 'll read you matter deep and dangerous.

Henry IV. Part I.

THE Marquis of Montserrat and the Grand Master of the Knights Templars stood together in the front of the royal pavilion, within which this singular scene had passed, and beheld a strong guard of bills and bows drawn out to form a circle around it, and keep at distance all which might disturb the sleeping monarch. The soldiers wore the downcast, silent, and sullen looks with which they trail their arms at a funeral, and stepped with such caution that you could not hear a buckler ring or a sword clatter, though so many men in armour were moving around the tent. They lowered their weapons in deep reverence as the dignitaries passed through their files, but with the same profound silence.

'There is a change of cheer among these island dogs,' said the Grand Master to Conrade, when they had passed Richard's Guards. 'What hoarse tumult and revel used to be before this pavilion! nought but pitching the bar, hurling the ball, wrestling, roaring of songs, clattering of wine-pots, and quaffing of flagons among these burly yeomen, as if they were holding some country wake, with a Maypole in the midst of them instead of a royal standard.'

'Mastiffs are a faithful race,' said Conrade: 'and the King their master has won their love by being ready to wrestle, brawl, or revel amongst the foremost of them, whenever the humour seized him.'

'He is totally compounded of humours,' said the Grand Master. 'Marked you the pledge he gave us, instead of a prayer, over his grace-cup yonder?'

'He would have felt it a grace-cup, and a well-spiced one too,' said the Marquis, 'were Saladin like any other Turk that

ever wore turban or turned him to Mecca at call of the muezzin. But he affects faith, and honour, and generosity, as if it were for an unbaptized dog like him to practise the virtuous bearing of a Christian knight. It is said he hath applied to Richard to be admitted within the pale of chivalry.

'By St. Bernard!' exclaimed the Grand Master, 'it were time then to throw off our belts and spurs, Sir Conrade, deface our armorial bearings, and renounce our burgonets, if the highest honour of Christianity were conferred on an unchristened Turk of tenpence.'

'You rate the Soldan cheap,' replied the Marquis; 'yet, though he be a likely man, I have seen a better heathen sold for forty pence at the bagnio.'

They were now near their horses, which stood at some distance from the royal tent, prancing among the gallant train of esquires and pages by whom they were attended, when Conrade, after a moment's pause, proposed that they should enjoy the coolness of the evening breeze which had arisen, and, dismissing their steeds and attendants, walk homewards to their own quarters, through the lines of the extended Christian camp. The Grand Master assented, and they proceeded to walk together accordingly, avoiding, as if by mutual consent, the more inhabited parts of the canvas city, and tracing the broad esplanade which lay between the tents and the external defences, where they could converse in private, and unmarked, save by the sentinels as they passed them.

They spoke for a time upon the military points and preparations for defence; but this sort of discourse, in which neither seemed to take interest, at length died away, and there was a long pause, which terminated by the Marquis of Montserrat stopping short, like a man who has formed a sudden resolution, and, gazing for some moments on the dark, inflexible countenance of the Grand Master, he at length addressed him thus: 'Might it consist with your valour and sanctity, reverend Sir Giles Amaury, I would pray you for once to lay aside the dark vizor which you wear and to converse with a friend barefaced.'

The Templar half-smiled. 'There are light-coloured masks,' he said, 'as well as dark vizors, and the one conceals the natural features as completely as the other.'

'Be it so,' said the Marquis, putting his hand to his chin, and withdrawing it with the action of one who unmasks himself; 'there lies my disguise. And now, what think you, as

touching the interests of your own order, of the prospects of this Crusade?'

'This is tearing the veil from my thoughts, rather than exposing your own,' said the Grand Master; 'yet I will reply with a parable told to me by a santon of the desert. "A certain farmer prayed to Heaven for rain, and murmured when it fell not at his need. To punish his impatience, Allah," said the santon, "sent the Euphrates upon his farm, and he was destroyed with all his possessions, even by the granting of his own wishes."'

'Most truly spoken,' said the Marquis Conrade; 'would that the ocean had swallowed up nineteen parts of the armaments of these Western princes! What remained would better have served the purpose of the Christian nobles of Palestine, the wretched remnant of the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. Left to ourselves, we might have bent to the storm, or, moderately supported with money and troops, we might have compelled Saladin to respect our valour, and grant us peace and protection on easy terms. But, from the extremity of danger with which this powerful Crusade threatens the Soldan, we cannot suppose, should it pass over, that the Saracen will suffer any one of us to hold possessions or principalities in Syria, far less permit the existence of the Christian military fraternities, from whom they have experienced so much mischief.'

'Ay, but,' said the Templar, 'these adventurous Crusaders may succeed, and again plant the cross on the bulwarks of Zion.'

'And what will that advantage either the Order of the Templars or Conrade of Montserrat?' said the Marquis.

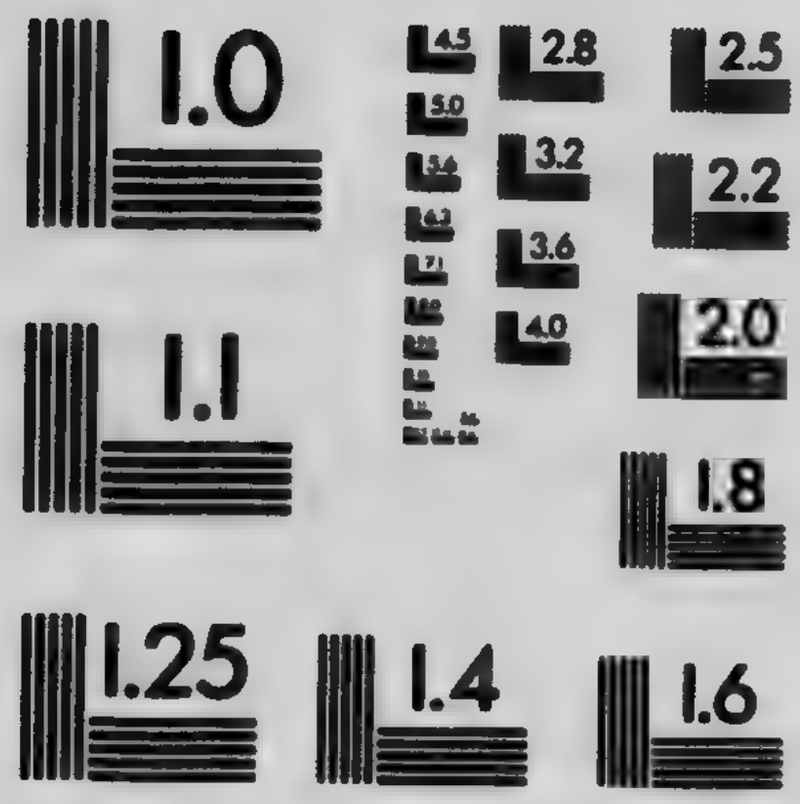
'You it may advantage,' replied the Grand Master. 'Conrade of Montserrat might become Conrade King of Jerusalem.'

'That sounds like something,' said the Marquis, 'and yet it rings but hollow. Godfrey of Bouillon might well choose the crown of thorns for his emblem. Grand Master, I will confess to you I have caught some attachment to the Eastern form of government. A pure and simple monarchy should consist but of king and subjects. Such is the simple and primitive structure — a shepherd and his flock. All this internal chain of feudal dependence is artificial and sophisticated, and I would rather hold the baton of my poor marquisate with a firm gripe, and wield it after my pleasure, than the sceptre of a monarch, to be in effect restrained and curbed by the will of as many

JERUSALEM.
(From an old engraving.)

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



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proud feudal barons as hold land under the Assize of Jerusalem.[1] A king should tread freely, Grand Master, and should not be controlled by here a ditch and there a fence, here a feudal privilege and there a mail-clad baron with his sword in his hand to maintain it. To sum the whole, I am aware that Guy de Lusignan's claims to the throne would be preferred to mine, if Richard recovers and has aught to say in the choice.'

'Enough,' said the Grand Master; 'thou hast indeed convinced me of thy sincerity. Others may hold the same opinions, but few, save Conrade of Montserrat, dared frankly avow that he desires not the restitution of the kingdom of Jerusalem, but rather prefers being master of a portion of its fragments, like the barbarous islanders, who labour not for the deliverance of a goodly vessel from the billows, expecting rather to enrich themselves at the expense of the wreck.'

'Thou wilt not betray my counsel?' said Conrade, looking sharply and suspiciously. 'Know, for certain, that my tongue shall never wrong my head, nor my hand forsake the defence of either. Impeach me if thou wilt: I am prepared to defend myself in the lists against the best Templar who ever laid lance in rest.'

'Yet thou start'st somewhat suddenly for so bold a steed,' said the Grand Master. 'However, I swear to thee by the Holy Temple, which our order is sworn to defend, that I will keep counsel with thee as a true comrade.'

'By which temple?' said the Marquis of Montserrat, whose love of sarcasm often outran his policy and discretion; 'swearest thou by that on the hill of Zion, which was built by King Solomon, or by that symbolical, emblematical edifice which is said to be spoken of in the councils held in the vaults of your preceptories, as something which infers the aggrandisement of thy valiant and venerable order?'

The Templar scowled upon him with an eye of death, but answered calmly, 'By whatever temple I swear, be assured, Lord Marquis, my oath is sacred. I would I knew how to bind *thee* by one of equal obligation.'

'I will swear truth to thee,' said the Marquis, laughing, 'by the earl's coronet, which I hope to convert, ere these wars are over, into something better. It feels cold on my brow, that same slight coronel; a duke's cap of maintenance were a better protection against such a night-breeze as now blows, and a king's crown more preferable still, being lined with comfortable

[1] See Assisses de Jerusalem. Note 6.

ermine and velvet. In a word, our interests bind us together; for think not, Lord Grand Master, that, were these allied princes to regain Jerusalem, and place a king of their own choosing there, they would suffer your order, any more than my poor marquisate, to retain the independence which we now hold. No, by Our Lady! In such case, the proud Knights of St. John must again spread plasters and dress plague-sores in the hospitals; and you, most puissant and venerable Knights of the Temple, must return to your condition of simple men-at-arms, sleep three on a pallet, and mount two upon one horse, as your present seal still expresses to have been your ancient most simple custom.'

'The rank, privileges, and opulence of our order prevent so much degradation as you threaten,' said the Templar, haughtily.

'These are your bane,' said Conrade of Montserrat; 'and you, as well as I, reverend Grand Master, know that, were the allied princes to be successful in Palestine, it would be their first point of policy to abate the independence of your order, which, but for the protection of our holy father the Pope, and the necessity of employing your valour in the conquest of Palestine, you would long since have experienced. Give them complete success, and you will be flung aside, as the splinters of a broken lance are tossed out of the tilt-yard.'

'There may be truth in what you say,' said the Templar, darkly smiling; 'but what were our hopes should the allies withdraw their forces, and leave Palestine in the grasp of Saladin?'

'Great and assured,' replied Conrade: 'the Soldan would give large provinces to maintain at his behest a body of well-appointed Frankish lances. In Egypt, in Persia, an hundred such auxiliaries, joined to his own light cavalry, would turn the battle against the most fearful odds. This dependence would be but for a time, perhaps during the life of this enterprising Soldan; but, in the East, empires arise like mushrooms. Suppose him dead, and us strengthened with a constant succession of fiery and adventurous spirits from Europe, what might we not hope to achieve, uncontrolled by these monarchs, whose dignity throws us at present into the shade, and, were they to remain here and succeed in this expedition, would willingly consign us for ever to degradation and dependence?'

'You say well, my Lord Marquis,' said the Grand Master; 'and your words find an echo in my bosom. Yet must we be cautious: Philip of France is wise as well as valiant.'

'True, and will be therefore the more easily diverted from an expedition to which, in a moment of enthusiasm, or urged by his nobles, he rashly bound himself. He is jealous of King Richard, his natural enemy, and longs to return to prosecute plans of ambition nearer to Paris than Palestine. Any fair pretence will serve him for withdrawing from a scene in which he is aware he is wasting the force of his kingdom.'

'And the Duke of Austria?' said the Templar.

'Oh, touching the Duke,' returned Conrade, 'his self-conceit and folly lead him to the same conclusions as do Philip's policy and wisdom. He conceives himself, God help the while, ungratefully treated, because men's mouths, even those of his own *minnesingers*, are filled with the praises of King Richard, whom he fears and hates, and in whose harm he would rejoice, like those unbred dastardly curs, who, if the foremost of the pack is hurt by the gripe of the wolf, are much more likely to assail the sufferer from behind than to come to his assistance. But wherefore tell I this to thee, save to show that I am in sincerity in desiring that this league be broken up, and the country freed of these great monarchs with their hosts? And thou well knowest, and hast thyself seen, how all the princes of influence and power, one alone excepted, are eager to enter into treaty with the Soldan.'

'I acknowledge it,' said the Templar: 'he were blind that had not seen this in their last deliberations. But lift yet thy mask an inch higher, and tell me thy real reason for pressing upon the council that Northern Englishman, or Scot, or whatever you call yonder Knight of the Leopard, to carry their proposals for a treaty?'

'There was a policy in it,' replied the Italian: 'his character of native of Britain was sufficient to meet what Saladin required, who knew him to belong to the band of Richard, while his character of Scot, and certain other personal grudges which I wot of, rendered it most unlikely that our envoy should, on his return, hold any communication with the sick-bed of Richard, to whom his presence was ever unacceptable.'

'Oh, too fine-spun policy,' said the Grand Master; 'trust me, that Italian spiders' webs will never bind this unshorn Samson of the isle; well if you can do it with new cords, and those of the toughest. See you not that the envoy whom you have selected so carefully hath brought us, in this physician, the means of restoring the lion-hearted, bull-necked Englishman, to prosecute his Crusading enterprise; and, so soon as he

is able once more to rush on, which of the princes dare hold back? They must follow him for very shame, although they would march under the banner of Satan as soon.'

'Be content,' said Conrade of Montserrat; 'ere this physician, if he work by anything short of miraculous agency, can accomplish Richard's cure, it may be possible to put some open rupture betwixt the Frenchman, at least the Austrian, and his allies of England, so that the breach shall be irreconcilable; and Richard may arise from his bed perhaps to command his own native troops, but never again, by his sole energy, to wield the force of the whole Crusade.'

'Thou art a willing archer,' said the Templar; 'but, Conrade of Montserrat, thy bow is over-slack to carry an arrow to the mark.'

He then stopt short, cast a suspicious glance to see that no one overheard him, and taking Conrade by the hand, pressed it eagerly as he looked the Italian in the face, and repeated slowly: 'Richard arise from his bed, say'st thou? Conrade, he must never arise!'

The Marquis of Montserrat started. 'What! spoke you of Richard of England — of Cœur-de-Lion — the champion of Christendom?'

His cheek turned pale and his knees trembled as he spoke. The Templar looked at him, with his iron visage contorted into a smile of contempt.

'Know'st thou what thou look'st like, Sir Conrade, at this moment? Not like the politic and valiant Marquis of Montserrat — not like him who would direct the council of princes and determine the fate of empires; but like a novice who, stumbling upon a conjuration in his master's book of gramarye, has raised the devil when he least thought of it, and now stands terrified at the spirit which appears before him.'

'I grant you,' said Conrade, recovering himself, 'that, unless some other sure road could be discovered, thou hast hinted at that which leads most direct to our purpose. But, blessed Mary! we shall become the curse of all Europe, the malediction of every one, from the Pope on his throne to the very beggar at the church gate, who, ragged and leprous, in the last extremity of human wretchedness, shall bless himself that he is neither Giles Amaury nor Conrade of Montserrat.'

'If thou takest it thus,' said the Grand Master, with the same composure which characterised him all through this remarkable dialogue, 'let us hold there has nothing passed

between us—that we have spoken in our sleep—have awakened, and the vision is gone.'

'It never can depart,' answered Conrade.

'Visions of ducal crowns and kingly diadems are, indeed, somewhat tenacious of their place in the imagination,' replied the Grand Master.

'Well,' answered Conrade, 'let me but first try to break peace between Austria and England.'

They parted. Conrade remained standing still upon the spot, and watching the flowing white cloak of the Templar, as he stalked slowly away, and gradually disappeared amid the fast-sinking darkness of the Oriental night. Proud, ambitious, unscrupulous, and politic, the Marquis of Montserrat was yet not cruel by nature. He was a voluptuary and an epicurean, and, like many who profess this character, was averse, even upon selfish motives, from inflicting pain, or witnessing acts of cruelty; and he retained also a general sense of respect for his own reputation, which sometimes supplies the want of the better principle by which reputation is to be maintained.

'I have,' he said, as his eyes still watched the point at which he had seen the last slight wave of the Templar's mantle—'I have, in truth, raised the devil with a vengeance! Who would have thought this stern ascetic Grand Master, whose whole fortune and misfortune is merged in that of his order, would be willing to do more for its advancement than I who labour for my own interest? To check this wild Crusade was my motive, indeed, but I durst not think on the ready mode which this determined priest has dared to suggest; yet it is the surest, perhaps even the safest.'

Such were the Marquis's meditations, when his muttered soliloquy was broken by a voice from a little distance, which proclaimed with the emphatic tone of a herald—'Remember the Holy Sepulchre!'

The exhortation was echoed from post to post, for it was the duty of the sentinels to raise this cry from time to time upon their periodical watch, that the host of the Crusaders might always have in their remembrance the purpose of their being in arms. But though Conrade was familiar with the custom, and had heard the warning voice on all former occasions as a matter of habit; yet it came at the present moment so strongly in contact with his own train of thought, that it seemed a voice from Heaven warning him against the iniquity which his heart meditated. He looked around anxiously, as if, like the

patriarch of old, though from very different circumstances, he was expecting some ram caught in a thicket — some substitution for the sacrifice which his comrade proposed to offer, not to the Supreme Being, but to the Moloch of their own ambition. As he looked, the broad folds of the ensign of England, heavily distending itself to the failing night-breeze, caught his eye. It was displayed upon an artificial mound, nearly in the midst of the camp, which perhaps of old some Hebrew chief or champion had chosen as a memorial of his place of rest. If so, the name was now forgotten, and the Crusaders had christened it St. George's Mount, because from that commanding height the banner of England was supereminently displayed, as if an emblem of sovereignty over the many distinguished, noble, and even royal, ensigns which floated in lower situations.

A quick intellect like that of Conrade catches ideas from the glance of a moment. A single look on the standard seemed to dispel the uncertainty of mind which had affected him. He walked to his pavilion with the hasty and determined step of one who has adopted a plan which he is resolved to achieve, dismissed the almost princely train who waited to attend him, and, as he committed himself to his couch, muttered his amended resolution, that the milder means are to be tried before the more desperate are resorted to.

'To-morrow,' he said, 'I sit at the board of the Archduke of Austria; we will see what can be done to advance our purpose, before prosecuting the dark suggestions of this Templar.'

CHAPTER XI

One thing is certain in our Northern land,
Allow that birth, or valour, wealth, or wit,
Give each precedence to their possessor,
Envy, that follows on such eminence,
As comes the lyme-hound on the roebuck's trace,
Shall pull them down each one.

SIR DAVID LINDSAY.

LEOPOLD, Grand Duke of Austria, was the first possessor of that noble country to whom the princely rank belonged. He had been raised to the ducal sway in the German empire on account of his near relationship to the Emperor, Henry the Stern, and held under his government the finest provinces which are watered by the Danube. His character has been stained in history on account of one action of violence and perfidy, which arose out of these very transactions in the Holy Land; and yet the shame of having made Richard a prisoner, when he returned through his dominions, unattended and in disguise, was not one which flowed from Leopold's natural disposition. He was rather a weak and a vain than an ambitious or tyrannical prince. His mental powers resembled the qualities of his person. He was tall, strong, and handsome, with a complexion in which red and white were strongly contrasted, and had long flowing locks of fair hair. But there was an awkwardness in his gait, which seemed as if his size was not animated by energy sufficient to put in motion such a mass; and in the same manner, wearing the richest dresses, it always seemed as if they became him not. As a prince, he appeared too little familiar with his own dignity, and being often at a loss how to assert his authority when the occasion demanded it, he frequently thought himself obliged to recover, by acts and expressions of ill-timed violence, the ground which might have been easily and gracefully maintained by a little more presence of mind in the beginning of the controversy.

Not only were these deficiencies visible to others, but the

Archduke himself could not but sometimes entertain a painful consciousness that he was not altogether fit to maintain and assert the high rank which he had acquired; and to this was joined the strong, and sometimes the just, suspicion that others esteemed him lightly accordingly.

When he first joined the Crusade, with a most princely attendance, Leopold had desired much to enjoy the friendship and intimacy of Richard, and had made such advances towards cultivating his regard as the King of England ought, in policy, to have received and answered. But the Archduke, though not deficient in bravery, was so infinitely inferior to Cœur de-Lion in that ardour of mind which wooed danger as a bride, that the King very soon held him in a certain degree of contempt. Richard, also, as a Norman prince, a people with whom temperance was habitual, despised the inclination of the German for the pleasures of the table, and particularly his liberal indulgence in the use of wine. For these and other personal reasons the King of England very soon looked upon the Austrian prince with feelings of contempt, which he was at no pains to conceal or modify, and which, therefore, were speedily remarked, and returned with deep hatred, by the suspicious Leopold. The discord between them was fanned by the secret and politic arts of Philip of France, one of the most sagacious monarchs of the time, who, dreading the fiery and overbearing character of Richard, considering him as his natural rival, and feeling offended, moreover, at the dictatorial manner in which he, a vassal of France for his continental domains, conducted himself towards his liege lord, endeavoured to strengthen his own party, and weaken that of Richard, by uniting the Crusading princes of inferior degree in resistance to what he termed the usurping authority of the King of England. Such was the state of politics and opinions entertained by the Archduke of Austria, when Conrade of Montserrat resolved upon employing his jealousy of England as the means of dissolving, or loosening at least, the league of the Crusaders.

The time which he chose for his visit was noon, and the pretence, to present the Archduke with some choice Cyprus wine which had lately fallen into his hands, and discuss its comparative merits with those of Hungary and of the Rhine. An intimation of his purpose was of course answered by a courteous invitation to partake of the archducal meal, and every effort was used to render it fitting the splendour of a

sovereign prince. Yet the refined taste of the Italian saw more cumbrous profusion than elegance or splendour in the display of provisions under which the board groaned.

The Germans, though still possessing the martial and frank character of their ancestors, who subdued the Roman empire, had retained withal no slight tinge of their barbarism. The practices and principles of chivalry were not carried to such a nice pitch amongst them as amongst the French and English knights, nor were they strict observers of the prescribed rules of society, which among those nations were supposed to express the height of civilisation. Sitting at the table of the Archduke, Conrade was at once stunned and amused with the clang of Teutonic sounds assaulting his ears on all sides, notwithstanding the solemnity of a princely banquet. Their dress seemed equally fantastic to him, many of the Austrian nobles retaining their long beards, and almost all of them wearing short jerkins of various colours, cut, and flourished, and fringed in a manner not common in Western Europe.

Numbers of dependants, old and young, attended in the pavilion, mingled at times in the conversation, received from their masters the relics of the entertainment, and devoured them as they stood behind the backs of the company. Jesters, dwarfs, and minstrels were there in unusual numbers, and more noisy and intrusive than they were permitted to be in better-regulated society. As they were allowed to share freely in the wine, which flowed round in large quantities, their licensed tumult was the more excessive.

All this while, and in the midst of a clamour and confusion which would better have become a German tavern during a fair than the tent of a sovereign prince, the Archduke was waited upon with a minuteness of form and observance which showed how anxious he was to maintain rigidly the state and character to which his elevation had entitled him. He was served on the knee, and only by pages of noble blood, fed upon plate of silver, and drank his Tokay and Rhenish wines from a cup of gold. His ducal mantle was splendidly adorned with ermine, his coronet might have equalled in value a royal crown, and his feet, cased in velvet shoes, the length of which, peaks included, might be two feet, rested upon a footstool of solid silver. But it served partly to intimate the character of the man, that, although desirous to show attention to the Marquis of Montserrat, whom he had courteously placed at his right hand, he gave much more of his attention to his *spruchsprecher*,

that is, his man of conversation, or 'sayer of sayings,' who stood behind the Duke's right shoulder.

This personage was well attired, in a cloak and doublet of black velvet, the last of which was decorated with various silver and gold coins, stitched upon it, in memory of the munificent princes who had conferred them, and bearing a short staff, to which also bunches of silver coins were attached by rings, which he jingled by way of attracting attention, when he was about to say anything which he judged worthy of it. This person's capacity in the household of the Archduke was somewhat betwixt that of a minstrel and a counsellor: he was by turns a flatterer, a poet, and an orator; and those who desired to be well with the Duke generally studied to gain the goodwill of the *spruchsprecher*.

Lest too much of this officer's wisdom should become tiresome, the Duke's other shoulder was occupied by his *hoffnarr*, or court jester, called Jonas Schwanker, who made almost as much noise with his fool's cap, bells, and bauble as did the orator, or man of talk, with his jingling baton.

These two personages threw out grave and comic nonsense alternately, while their master, laughing or applauding them himself, yet carefully watched the countenance of his noble guest, to discern what impressions so accomplished a cavalier received from this display of Austrian eloquence and wit. It is hard to say whether the man of wisdom or the man of folly contributed most to the amusement of the party, or stood highest in the estimation of their princely master; but the allies of both seemed excellently well received. Sometimes they became rivals for the conversation, and clanged their flappers in emulation of each other, with a most alarming contention; but, in general, they seemed on such good terms, and so accustomed to support each other's play, that the *spruchsprecher* often condescended to follow up the jester's witticisms with an explanation, to render them more obvious to the capacity of the audience: so that his wisdom became a sort of commentary on the buffoon's folly. And sometimes, in requital, the *hoffnarr*, with a pithy jest, wound up the conclusion of the orator's tedious harangue.

Whatever his real sentiments might be, Conrade took especial care that his countenance should express nothing but satisfaction with what he heard, and smiled or applauded as zealously, to all appearance, as the Archduke himself, at the solemn folly of the *spruchsprecher* and the gibbering wit of the fool. In fact, he watched carefully until the one or other should intro-

duce some topic favourable to the purpose which was uppermost in his mind.

It was not long ere the King of England was brought on the carpet by the jester, who had been accustomed to consider Dickon of the Broom, which irreverent epithet he substituted for Richard Plantagenet, as a subject of mirth acceptable and inexhaustible. The orator, indeed, was silent, and it was only when applied to by Conrade that he observed, 'The *genista*, or broom-plant, was an emblem of humility; and it would be well when those who wore it would remember the warning.'

The allusion to the illustrious badge of Plantagenet was thus rendered sufficiently manifest, and Jonas Schwanker observed that 'they who humbled themselves had been exalted with a vengeance.'

'Honour unto whom honour is due,' answered the Marquis of Montserrat: 'we have all had some part in these marches and battles, and methinks other princes might share a little in the renown which Richard of England engrosses amongst minstrels and *minnesingers*. Has no one of the *joyeuse science* here present a song in praise of the royal Archduke of Austria, our princely entertainer?'

Three minstrels emulously stepped forward with voice and harp. Two were silenced with difficulty by the *spruchsprecher*, who seemed to act as master of the revels, and a hearing was at length procured for the poet preferred, who sung, in High German, stanzas which may be thus translated: —

'What brave chief shall head the forces,
Where the red-cross legions gather?
Best of horsemen, best of horses,
Highest head and fairest feather.'

Here the orator, jingling his staff, interrupted the bard to intimate to the party, what they might not have inferred from the description, that their royal host was the party indicated, and a full crowned goblet went round to the acclamation — '*Hoch lebe der Herzog Leopold!*'

Another stanza followed:

'Ask not Austria why, midst princes,
Still her banner rises highest;
Ask as well the strong-wing'd eagle,
Why to Heaven he soars the highest.'

'The eagle,' said the expounder of dark sayings, 'is the cognizance of our noble lord the Archduke — of his royal Grace,

I would say — and the eagle flies the highest and nearest to the sun of all the feathered creation.'

'The lion hath taken a spring above the eagle,' said Conrade, carelessly.

The Archduke reddened, and fixed his eyes on the speaker, while the *spruchsvrecher* answered, after a minute's consideration, 'The Lord Marquis will pardon me — a lion cannot fly above an eagle, because no lion hath got wings.'

'Except the lion of St. Mark,' responded the jester.

'That is the Venetian's banner,' said the Duke; 'but assuredly that amphibious race, half nobles, half merchants, will not dare to place their rank in comparison with ours?'

'Nay, it was not of the Venetian lion that I spoke,' said the Marquis of Montserrat; 'but of the three lions passant of England; formerly, it is said, they were leopards, but now they are become lions at all points, and must take precedence of beast, fish, or fowl, or woe worth the gainstander.'

'Mean you seriously, my lord?' said the Austrian, now considerably flushed with wine — 'think you that Richard of England asserts any pre-eminence over the free sovereigns who have been his voluntary allies in this Crusade?'

'I know not but from circumstances,' answered Conrade: 'yonder hangs his banner alone in the midst of our camp, as if he were king and generalissimo of our whole Christian army.'

'And do you endure this so patiently, and speak of it so coldly?' said the Archduke.

'Nay, my lord,' answered Conrade, 'it cannot concern the poor Marquis of Montserrat to contend against an injury patiently submitted to by such potent princes as Philip of France and Leopold of Austria. What dishonour you are pleased to submit to cannot be a disgrace to me.'

Leopold closed his fist and struck on the table with violence.

'I have told Philip of this,' he said — 'I have often told him that it was our duty to protect the inferior princes against the usurpation of this islander; but he answers me ever with cold respects of their relations together as suzerain and vassal, and that it were impolitic in him to make an open breach at this time and period.'

'The world knows that Philip is wise,' said Conrade, 'and will judge his submission to be policy. Yours, my lord, you can yourself alone account for; but I doubt not you have deep reasons for submitting to English domination.'

'*I* submit!' said Leopold, indignantly — '*I*, the Archduke of Austria, so important and vital a limb of the Holy Roman empire — *I* submit myself to this king of half an island — this grandson of a Norman bastard! No, by Heaven! The camp, and all Christendom, shall see that I know how to right myself, and whether I yield ground one inch to the English bandog. Up, my lieges and merry men — up and follow me! We will — and that without losing one instant — place the eagle of Austria where she shall float as high as ever floated the cognizance of king or kaiser.'

With that he started from his seat, and, amidst the tumultuous cheering of his guests and followers, made for the door of the pavilion, and seized his own banner, which stood pitched before it.

'Nay, my lord,' said Conrade, affecting to interfere, 'it will blemish your wisdom to make an affray in the camp at this hour, and perhaps it is better to submit to the usurpation of England a little longer than to——'

'Not an hour — not a moment longer,' vociferated the Duke; and, with the banner in his hand, and followed by his shouting guests and attendants, marched hastily to the central mount, from which the banner of England floated, and laid his hand on the standard-spear, as if to pluck it from the ground.

'My master — my dear master,' said Jonas Schwanker, throwing his arms about the Duke, 'take heed — lions have teeth——'

'And eagles have claws,' said the Duke, not relinquishing his hold on the banner-staff, yet hesitating to pull it from the ground.

The speaker of sentences, notwithstanding such was his occupation, had, nevertheless, some intervals of sound sense. He clashed his staff loudly, and Leopold, as if by habit, turned his head towards his man of counsel.

'The eagle is king among the fowls of the air,' said the *spruchsprecher*, 'as is the lion among the beasts of the field: each has his dominion, separated as wide as England and Germany; do thou, noble eagle, no dishonour to the princely lion, but let your banners remain floating in peace side by side.'

Leopold withdrew his hand from the banner-spear, and looked round for Conrade of Montserrat, but he saw him not; for the Marquis, so soon as he saw the mischief afoot, had withdrawn himself from the crowd, taking care, in the first place, to express before several neutral persons his regret that the Archduke should have chosen the hours after dinner to avenge

any wrong of which he might think he had a right to complain. Not seeing his guest, to whom he wished more particularly to have addressed himself, the Archduke said aloud, that, having no wish to breed dissension in the army of the Cross, he did but vindicate his own privileges and right to stand upon an equality with the King of England, without desiring, as he might have done, to advance his banner, which he derived from emperors, his progenitors, above that of a mere descendant of the Counts of Anjou; and, in the meantime, he commanded a cask of wine to be brought hither and pierced, for regaling the bystanders, who, with tuck of drum and sound of music, quaffed many a carouse round the Austrian standard.

This disorderly scene was not acted without a degree of noise which alarmed the whole camp.

The critical hour had arrived at which the physician, according to the rules of his art, had predicted that his royal patient might be awakened with safety, and the sponge had been applied for that purpose; and the leech had not made many observations ere he assured the Baron of Gilsland that the fever had entirely left his sovereign, and that, such was the happy strength of his constitution, it would not be even necessary, as in most cases, to give a second dose of the powerful medicine. Richard himself seemed to be of the same opinion, for, sitting up and rubbing his eyes, he demanded of De Vaux what present sum of money was in the royal coffers.

The baron could not exactly inform him of the amount.

'It matters not,' said Richard; 'be it greater or smaller, bestow it all on this learned leech, who hath, I trust, given me back again to the service of the Crusade. If it be less than a thousand byzants, let him have jewels to make it up.'

'I sell not the wisdom with which Allah has endowed me,' answered the Arabian physician; 'and be it known to you, great prince, that the divine medicine of which you have partaken would lose its effects in my unworthy hands, did I exchange its virtues either for gold or diamonds.'

'The physician refuseth a gratuity!' said De Vaux to himself. 'This is more extraordinary than his being an hundred years old.'

'Thomas de Vaux,' said Richard, 'thou knowest no courage but what belongs to the sword, no bounty and virtue but what are used in chivalry; I tell thee that this Moor, in his independence, might set an example to them who account themselves the flower of knighthood.'

'It is reward enough for me,' said the Moor, folding his arms on his bosom, and maintaining an attitude at once respectful and dignified, 'that so great a king as the Melech Ric[1] should thus speak of his servant. But now, let me pray you again to compose yourself on your couch; for though I think there needs no farther repetition of the divine draught, yet injury might ensue from any too early exertion, ere your strength be entirely restored.'

'I must obey thee, Hakim,' said the King; 'yet, believe me, my bosom feels so free from the wasting fire which for so many days hath scorched it that I care not how soon I expose it to a brave man's lance. But hark! what mean these shouts and that distant music in the camp? Go, Thomas de Vaux, and make inquiry.'

'It is the Archduke Leopold,' said De Vaux, returning after a minute's absence, 'who makes with his pot-companions some procession through the camp.'

'The drunken fool!' exclaimed King Richard, 'can he not keep his brutal inebriety within the veil of his pavilion, that he must needs show his shame to all Christendom? What say you, sir Marquis?' he added, addressing himself to Conrade of Montserrat, who at that moment entered the tent.

'Thus much, honoured prince,' answered the Marquis, 'that I delight to see your Majesty so well and so far recovered; and that is a long speech for any one to make who has partaken of the Duke of Austria's hospitality.'

'What! you have been dining with the Teutonic wine-skin,' said the monarch; 'and what frolic has he found out to cause all this disturbance? Truly, Sir Conrade, I have still held you so good a reveller, that I wonder at your quitting the game.'

De Vaux, who had got a little behind the King, now exerted himself, by look and sign, to make the Marquis understand that he should say nothing to Richard of what was passing without.

But Conrade understood not, or heeded not, the prohibition. 'What the Archduke does,' he said, 'is of little consequence to any one, least of all to himself, since he probably knows not what he is acting; yet, to say truth, it is a gambol I should not like to share in, since he is pulling down the banner of England from St. George's Mount in the centre of the camp yonder, and displaying his own in its stead.'

'WHAT say'st thou?' exclaimed the King, in a tone which might have waked the dead.

[1] Richard was thus called by the Eastern nations.

'Nay,' said the Marquis, 'let it not chafe your Highness that a fool should act according to his folly ——'

'Speak not to me,' said Richard, springing from his couch, and casting on his clothes with a despatch which seemed marvellous — 'speak not to me, Lord Marquis! De Multon, I command thee speak not a word to me: he that breathes but a syllable is no friend to Richard Plantagenet. Hakim, be silent, I charge thee!'

All this while the King was hastily clothing himself, and, with the last word, snatched his sword from the pillar of the tent, and without any other weapon, or calling any attendance, he rushed out of his pavilion. Conrade, holding up his hands, as if in astonishment, seemed willing to enter into conversation with De Vaux, but Sir Thomas pushed rudely past him, and calling to one of the royal equerries, said hastily, 'Fly to Lord Salisbury's quarters, and let him get his men together, and follow me instantly to St. George's Mount. Tell him the King's fever has left his blood and settled in his brain.'

Imperfectly heard, and still more imperfectly comprehended by the startled attendant whom De Vaux addressed thus hastily, the equerry and his fellow-servants of the royal chamber rushed hastily into the tents of the neighbouring nobility, and quickly spread an alarm, as general as the cause seemed vague, through the whole British forces. The English soldiers, waked in alarm from that noon-day rest which the heat of the climate had taught them to enjoy as a luxury, hastily asked each other the cause of the tumult, and, without waiting an answer, supplied by the force of their own fancy the want of information. Some said the Saracens were in the camp, some that the King's life was attempted, some that he had died of the fever the preceding night, many that he was assassinated by the Duke of Austria. The nobles and officers, at an equal loss with the common men to ascertain the real cause of the disorder, laboured only to get their followers under arms and under authority, lest their rashness should occasion some great misfortune to the Crusading army. The English trumpets sounded loud, shrill, and continuously. The alarm-cry of 'Bows and bills — bows and bills!' was heard from quarter to quarter, again and again shouted, and again and again answered by the presence of the ready warriors, and their national invocation, 'St. George for merry England!'

The alarm went through the nearest quarter of the camp, and men of all the various nations assembled, where, perhaps, every people in Christendom had their representatives, flew

to arms, and drew together under circumstances of general confusion, of which they knew neither the cause nor the object. It was, however, lucky, amid a scene so threatening, that the Earl of Salisbury, while he hurried after De Vaux's summons, with a few only of the readiest English men-at-arms, directed the rest of the English host to be drawn up and kept under arms, to advance to Richard's succour if necessity should require, but in fit array, and under due command, and not with the tumultuary haste which their own alarm, and zeal for the King's safety, might have dictated.

In the meanwhile, without regarding for one instant the shouts, the cries, the tumult which began to thicken around him, Richard, with his dress in the last disorder, and his sheathed blade under his arm, pursued his way with the utmost speed, followed only by De Vaux and one or two household servants, to St. George's Mount.

He outsped even the alarm which his impetuosity only had excited, and passed the quarter of his own gallant troops of Normandy, Poitou, Gascony, and Anjou before the disturbance had reached them, although the noise accompanying the German revel had induced many of the soldiery to get on foot to listen. The handful of Scots were also quartered in the vicinity, nor had they been disturbed by the uproar. But the King's person and his haste were both remarked by the Knight of the Leopard, who, aware that danger must be afoot, and hastening to share in it, snatched his shield and sword and united himself to De Vaux, who with some difficulty kept pace with his impatient and fiery master. De Vaux answered a look of curiosity which the Scottish knight directed towards him with a shrug of his broad shoulders, and they continued, side by side, to pursue Richard's steps.

The King was soon at the foot of St. George's Mount, the sides as well as platform of which were now surrounded and crowded, partly by those belonging to the Duke of Austria's retinue, who were celebrating, with shouts of jubilee, the act which they considered as an assertion of national honour; partly by bystanders of different nations, whom dislike to the English, or mere curiosity, had assembled together to witness the end of these extraordinary proceedings. Through this disorderly troop Richard burst his way, like a goodly ship under full sail, which cleaves her forcible passage through the rolling billows, and heeds not that they unite after her passage and roar upon her stern.

The summit of the eminence was a small level space, on which were pitched the rival banners, surrounded still by the Archduke's friends and retinue. In the midst of the circle was Leopold himself, still contemplating with self-satisfaction the deed he had done, and still listening to the shouts of applause which his partizans bestowed with no sparing breath. While he was in this state of self-gratulation, Richard burst into the circle, attended, indeed, only by two men, but in his own headlong energies an irresistible host.

'Who has dared,' he said, laying his hands upon the Austrian standard, and speaking in a voice like the sound which precedes an earthquake — 'who has dared to place this paltry rag beside the banner of England?'

The Archduke wanted not personal courage, and it was impossible he could hear this question without reply. Yet, so much was he troubled and surprised by the unexpected arrival of Richard, and affected by the general awe inspired by his ardent and unyielding character, that the demand was twice repeated, in a tone which seemed to challenge heaven and earth, ere the Archduke replied, with such firmness as he could command, 'It was I, Leopold of Austria.'

'Then shall Leopold of Austria,' replied Richard, 'presently see the rate at which his banner and his pretensions are held by Richard of England.'

So saying, he pulled up the standard-spear, splintered it to pieces, threw the banner itself on the ground, and placed his foot upon it.

'Thus,' said he, 'I trample on the banner of Austria! Is there a knight among your Teutonic chivalry dare impeach my deed?'

There was a momentary silence; but there are no braver men than the Germans.

'I!' and 'I!' and 'I!' was heard from several knights of the Duke's followers; and he himself added his voice to those which accepted the King of England's defiance.

'Why do we dally thus?' said the Earl Wallenrode, a gigantic warrior from the frontiers of Hungary. 'Brethren and noble gentlemen, this man's foot is on the honour of your country. Let us rescue it from violation, and down with the pride of England!'

So saying, he drew his sword and struck at the King a blow which might have proved fatal, had not the Scot intercepted and caught it upon his shield.

'I have sworn,' said King Richard, and his voice was heard above all the tumult, which now waxed wild and loud, 'never to strike one whose shoulder bears the cross; therefore live, Wallenrode, but live to remember Richard of England.'

As he spoke, he grasped the Hungarian round the waist, and, unmatched in wrestling as in other military exercises, hurled him backwards with such violence that the mass flew, as if discharged from a military engine, not only through the ring of spectators who witnessed the extraordinary scene, but over the edge of the mount itself, down the steep side of which Wallenrode rolled headlong, until, pitching at length upon his shoulder, he dislocated the bone, and lay like one dead. This almost supernatural display of strength did not encourage either the Duke or any of his followers to renew a personal contest so inauspiciously commenced. Those who stood farthest back did, indeed, clash their swords and cry out, 'Cut the island mastiff to pieces!' but those who were nearer veiled, perhaps, their personal fears under an affected regard for order, and cried, for the most part, 'Peace — peace — the peace of the Cross — the peace of Holy Church and our Father the Pope!'

These various cries of the assailants, contradicting each other, showed their irresolution; while Richard, his foot still on the archducal banner, glared round him, with an eye that seemed to seek an enemy, and from which the angry Austrians shrunk appalled, as from the threatened grasp of a lion. De Vaux and the Knight of the Leopard kept their places beside him; and though the swords which they held were still sheathed, it was plain that they were prompt to protect Richard's person to the very last, and their size and remarkable strength plainly showed the defence would be a desperate one.

Salisbury and his attendants were also now drawing near, with bills and partizans brandished, and bows already bended.

At this moment, King Philip of France, attended by one or two of his nobles, came on the platform to inquire the cause of the disturbance, and made gestures of surprise at finding the King of England raised from his sick-bed, and confronting their common ally the Duke of Austria in such a menacing and insulting posture. Richard himself blushed at being discovered by Philip, whose sagacity he respected as much as he disliked his person, in an attitude neither becoming his character as a monarch nor as a Crusader; and it was observed that he withdrew his foot, as if accidentally, from the dishonoured banner,

and exchanged his look of violent emotion for one of affected composure and indifference. Leopold also struggled to attain some degree of calmness, mortified as he was by having been seen by Philip in the act of passively submitting to the insults of the fiery King of England.

Possessed of many of those royal qualities for which he was termed by his subjects 'the august,' Philip might be termed the Ulysses, as Richard was indisputably the Achilles, of the Crusade. The King of France was sagacious, wise, deliberate in council, steady and calm in action, seeing clearly, and steadily pursuing, the measures most for the interest of his kingdom, dignified and royal in his deportment, brave in person, but a politician rather than a warrior. The Crusade would have been no choice of his own, but the spirit was contagious, and the expedition was enforced upon him by the church, and by the unanimous wish of his nobility. In any other situation, or in a milder age, his character might have stood higher than that of the adventurous Cœur-de-Lion; but in the Crusade, itself an undertaking wholly irrational, sound reason was the quality, of all others, least estimated, and the chivalric valour which both the age and the enterprise demanded was considered as debased if mingled with the least touch of discretion. So that the merit of Philip, compared with that of his haughty rival, showed like the clear but minute flame of a lamp, placed near the glare of a huge blazing torch, which, not possessing half the utility, makes ten times more impression on the eye. Philip felt his inferiority in public opinion, with the pain natural to a high-spirited prince; and it cannot be wondered at if he took such opportunities as offered for placing his own character in more advantageous contrast with that of his rival. The present seemed one of those occasions in which prudence and calmness might reasonably expect to triumph over obstinacy and impetuous violence.

'What means this unseemly broil betwixt the sworn brethren of the Cross — the royal Majesty of England and the princely Duke Leopold? How is it possible that those who are the chiefs and pillars of this holy expedition ——'

'A truce with thy remonstrance, France,' said Richard, enraged inwardly at finding himself placed on a sort of equality with Leopold, yet not knowing how to resent it, 'this duke, or prince, or pillar, if you will, hath been insolent, and I have chastised him — that is all. Here is a coil, forsooth, because of spurning a hound!'

'Majesty of France,' said the Duke, 'I appeal to you and every sovereign prince against the foul indignity which I have sustained. This King of England hath pulled down my banner, torn, and trampled on it.'

'Because he had the audacity to plant it beside mine,' said Richard.

'My rank as thine equal entitled me,' replied the Duke, emboldened by the presence of Philip.

'Assert such equality for thy person,' said King Richard, 'and, by St. George, I will treat thy person as I did thy broidered kerchief there, fit but for the meanest use to which kerchief may be put.'

'Nay, but patience, brother of England,' said Philip, 'and I will presently show Austria that he is wrong in this matter. Do not think, noble Duke,' he continued, 'that, in permitting the standard of England to occupy the highest point in our camp, we, the independent sovereigns of the Crusade, acknowledge any inferiority to the royal Richard. It were inconsistent to think so; since even the oriflamme itself — the great banner of France, to which the royal Richard himself, in respect of his French possessions, is but a vassal — holds for the present an inferior place to the lions of England. But as sworn brethren of the Cross, military pilgrims, who, laying aside the pomp and pride of this world, are hewing with our swords the way to the Holy Sepulchre, I myself, and the other princes, have renounced to King Richard, from respect to his high renown and great feats of arms, that precedence which elsewhere, and upon other motives, would not have been yielded. I am satisfied that, when your royal grace of Austria shall have considered this, you will express sorrow for having placed your banner on this spot, and that the royal Majesty of England will then give satisfaction for the insult he has offered.'

The *spruchsprecher* and the jester had both retired to a safe distance when matters seemed coming to blows, but returned when words, their own commodity, seemed again about to become the order of the day.

The man of proverbs was so delighted with Philip's politic speech, that he clashed his baton at the conclusion, by way of emphasis, and forgot the presence in which he was so far as to say aloud, that he himself had never said a wiser thing in his life.

'It may be so,' whispered Jonas Schwanker, 'but we shall be whipt if you speak so loud.'

The Duke answered sullenly, that he would refer his quarrel

to the general council of the Crusade — a motion which Philip highly applauded, as qualified to take away a scandal most harmful to Christendom.

Richard, retaining the same careless attitude, listened to Philip until his oratory seemed exhausted, and then said aloud, 'I am drowsy, this fever hangs about me still. Brother of France, thou art acquainted with my humour, and that I have at all times but few words to spare; know, therefore, at once, I will submit a matter touching the honour of England neither to prince, pope, nor council. Here stands my banner; whatsoever pennon shall be reared within three butts' length of it — ay, were it the oriflamme, of which you were, I think, but now speaking — shall be treated as that dishonoured rag; nor will I yield other satisfaction than that which these poor limbs can render in the lists to any bold challenge — ay, were it against five champions instead of one.'

'Now,' said the jester, whispering his companion, 'that is as complete a piece of folly as if I myself had said it; but yet, I think, there may be in this matter a greater fool than Richard yet.'

'And who may that be?' asked the man of wisdom.

'Philip,' said the jester, 'or our own Royal Duke, should either accept the challenge. But oh, most sage *spruchsprecher*, what excellent kings would thou and I have made, since those on whose heads these crowns have fallen can play the proverb-monger and the fool as completely as ourselves!'

While these worthies plied their offices apart, Philip answered calmly to the almost injurious defiance of Richard, 'I came not hither to awaken fresh quarrels, contrary to the oath we have sworn and the holy cause in which we have engaged. I part from my brother of England as brothers should part, and the only strife between the lions of England and the lilies of France shall be, which shall be carried deepest into the ranks of the infidels.'

It is a bargain, my royal brother,' said Richard, stretching out his hand with all the frankness which belonged to his rash but generous disposition; 'and soon may we have the opportunity to try this gallant and fraternal wager.'

'Let this noble Duke also partake in the friendship of this happy moment,' said Philip; and the Duke approached, half-sullenly, half-willing to enter into some accommodation.

'I think not of fools, nor of their folly,' said Richard, carelessly; and the Archduke, turning his back on him, withdrew from the ground.

Richard looked after him as he retired. 'There is a sort of glow-worm courage,' he said, 'that shows only by night. I must not leave this banner unguarded in darkness; by daylight the look of the lions will alone defend it. Here, Thomas of Gilsland, I give thee the charge of the standard — watch over the honour of England.'

'Her safety is yet more dear to me,' said De Vaux, 'and the life of Richard is the safety of England. I must have your Highness back to your tent, and that without further tarriance.'

'Thou art a rough and peremptory nurse, De Vaux,' said the King, smiling; and then added, addressing Sir Kenneth, 'Valiant Scot, I owe thee a boon, and I will pay it richly. There stands the banner of England; watch it as a novice does his armour on the night before he is dubbed. Stir not from it three spears' length, and defend it with thy body against injury or insult. Sound thy bugle, if thou art assailed by more than three at once. Dost thou undertake the charge?'

'Willingly,' said Kenneth; 'and will discharge it upon penalty of my head. I will but arm me and return hither instantly.'

The Kings of France and England then took formal leave of each other, hiding, under an appearance of courtesy, the grounds of complaint which either had against the other — Richard against Philip, for what he deemed an officious interference betwixt him and Austria, and Philip against Cœur-de-Lion, for the disrespectful manner in which his mediation had been received. Those whom this disturbance had assembled now drew off in different directions, leading the contested mount in the same solitude which had subsisted till interrupted by the Austrian bravado. Men judged of the events of the day according to their partialities; and while the English charged the Austrian with having afforded the first ground of quarrel, those of other nations concurred in casting the greater blame upon the insular haughtiness and assuming character of Richard.

'Thou seest,' said the Marquis of Montserrat to the Grand Master of the Templars, 'that subtle courses are more effective than violence. I have unloosed the bonds which held together this bunch of sceptres and lances; thou wilt see them shortly fall asunder.'

'I would have called thy plan a good one,' said the Templar, 'had there been but one man of courage among yonder cold-blooded Austrians, to sever the bonds of which you speak with his sword. A knot that is unloosed may again be fastened, but not so the cord which has been cut to pieces.'

CHAPTER XII

'T is woman that seduces all mankind.
GAY.

IN the days of chivalry, a dangerous post, or a perilous adventure, was a reward frequently assigned to military bravery as a compensation for its former trials; just as, in ascending a precipice, the surmounting one crag only lifts the climber to points yet more dangerous.

It was midnight, and the moon rode clear and high in heaven, when Kenneth of Scotland stood upon his watch on St. George's Mount, beside the banner of England — a solitary sentinel, to protect the emblem of that nation against the insults which might be meditated among the thousands whom Richard's pride had made his enemies. High thoughts rolled, one after another, upon the mind of the warrior. It seemed to him as if he had gained some favour in the eyes of the chivalrous monarch, who till now had not seemed to distinguish him among the crowds of brave men whom his renown had assembled under his banner, and Sir Kenneth little recked that the display of royal regard consisted in placing him upon a post so perilous. The devotion of his ambitious and high placed affection inflamed his military enthusiasm. Hopeless as that attachment was, in almost any conceivable circumstances, those which had lately occurred had, in some degree, diminished the distance between Edith and himself. He upon whom Richard had conferred the distinction of guarding his banner was no longer an adventurer of slight note, but placed within the regard of a princess, although he was as far as ever from her level. An unknown and obscure fate could not now be his. If he was surprised and slain on the post which had been assigned him, his death — and he resolved it should be glorious — must deserve the praises, as well as call down the vengeance, of Cœur-de-Lion, and be followed by the regrets, and even the tears, of the high-born beauties of the English court. He

had now no longer reason to fear that he should die as a fool dieth.

Sir Kenneth had full leisure to enjoy these and similar high-souled thoughts, fostered by that wild spirit of chivalry which, amid its most extravagant and fantastic flights, was still pure from all selfish alloy — generous, devoted, and perhaps only thus far censurable, that it proposed objects and courses of action inconsistent with the frailties and imperfections of man. All nature around him slept in calm moonshine or in deep shadow. The long rows of tents and pavilions, glimmering or darkening as they lay in the moonlight or in the shade, were still and silent as the streets of a deserted city. Beside the banner-staff lay the large staghound already mentioned, the sole companion of Kenneth's watch, on whose vigilance he trusted for early warning of the approach of any hostile foot-step. The noble animal seemed to understand the purpose of their watch, for he looked from time to time at the rich folds of the heavy pennon, and, when the cry of the sentinels came from the distant lines and defences of the camp, he answered them with one deep and reiterated bark, as if to affirm that he too was vigilant in his duty. From time to time, also, he lowered his lofty head and wagged his tail, as his master passed and repassed him in the short turns which he took upon his post; or, when the knight stood silent and abstracted, leaning on his lance, and looking up towards heaven, his faithful attendant ventured sometimes, in the phrase of romance, 'to disturb his thoughts,' and awaken him from his reverie, by thrusting his large rough snout into the knight's gauntleted hand, to solicit a transitory caress.

Thus passed two hours of the knight's watch without anything remarkable occurring. At length, and upon a sudden, the gallant staghound bayed furiously, and seemed about to dash forward where the shadow lay the darkest, yet waited, as if in the slips, till he should know the pleasure of his master.

'Who goes there?' said Sir Kenneth, aware that there was something creeping forward on the shadowy side of the mount.

'In the name of Merlin and Maugis,' answered a hoarse, disagreeable voice, 'tie up your four-footed demon there, or I come not at you.'

'And who art thou that would approach my post?' said Sir Kenneth, bending his eyes as keenly as he could on some object, which he could just observe at the bottom of the ascent, without

being able to distinguish its form. 'Beware — I am here for death and life.'

'Take up thy long-fanged Sathanas,' said the voice, 'or I will conjure him with a bolt from my arblast.'

At the same time was heard the sound of a spring or check, as when a cross-bow is bent.

'Unbend thy arblast, and come into the moonlight,' said the Scot, 'or, by St. Andrew, I will pin thee to the earth, be what or whom thou wilt.'

As he spoke, he poised his long lance by the middle, and, fixing his eye upon the object which seemed to move, he brandished the weapon, as if meditating to cast it from his hand — a use of the weapon sometimes, though rarely, resorted to, when a missile was necessary. But Sir Kenneth was ashamed of his purpose, and grounded his weapon, when there stepped from the shadow into the moonlight, like an actor entering upon the stage, a stunted, decrepit creature, whom, by his fantastic dress and deformity, he recognised, even at some distance, for the male of the two dwarfs whom he had seen in the chapel at Engaddi. Recollecting, at the same moment, the other, and far different, visions of that extraordinary night, he gave his dog a signal, which he instantly understood, and, returning to the standard, laid himself down beside it with a stifled growl.

The little distorted miniature of humanity, assured of his safety from an enemy so formidable, came panting up the ascent, which the shortness of his legs rendered laborious, and, when he arrived on the platform at the top, shifted to his left hand the little cross-bow, which was just such a toy as children at that period were permitted to shoot small birds with, and, assuming an attitude of great dignity, gracefully extended his right hand to Sir Kenneth, in an attitude as if he expected he would salute it. But such a result not following, he demanded, in a sharp and angry tone of voice, 'Soldier, wherefore renderest thou not to Nectabanus the homage due to his dignity? Or, is it possible that thou canst have forgotten him?'

'Great Nectabanus,' answered the knight, willing to soothe the creature's humour, 'that were difficult for any one who has ever looked upon thee. Pardon me, however, that, being a soldier upon my post, with my lance in my hand, I may not give to one of thy puissance the advantage of coming within my guard, or of mastering my weapon. Suffice it, that I reverence thy dignity, and submit myself to thee as humbly as a man-at-arms in my place may.'

'It shall suffice,' said Nectabanus, 'so that you presently attend me to the presence of those who have sent me hither to summon you.'

'Great sir,' replied the knight, 'neither in this can I gratify thee, for my orders are to abide by this banner till daybreak; so I pray you to hold me excused in that matter also.'

So saying, he resumed his walk upon the platform; but the dwarf did not suffer him so easily to escape from his importunity.

'Look you,' he said, placing himself before Sir Kenneth, so as to interrupt his way, 'either obey me, sir knight, as in duty bound, or I will lay the command upon thee, in the name of one whose beauty could call down the genii from their sphere, and whose grandeur could command the immortal race when they had descended.'

A wild and improbable conjecture arose in the knight's mind, but he repelled it. It was impossible, he thought, that the lady of his love should have sent him such a message by such a messenger; yet his voice trembled as he said, 'Go to, Nectabanus. Tell me at once, and as a true man, whether this sublime lady of whom thou speakest be other than the houri with whose assistance I beheld thee sweeping the chapel at Engaddi?'

'How! presumptuous knight,' replied the dwarf, 'think'st thou the mistress of our own royal affections, the sharer of our greatness, and the partner of our comeliness, would demean herself by laying charge on such a vassal as thou? No, highly as thou art honoured, thou hast not yet deserved the notice of Queen Guenevra, the lovely bride of Arthur, from whose high seat even princes seem but pigmies. But look thou here, and as thou knowest or disownest this token, so obey or refuse her commands who hath deigned to impose them on thee.'

So saying, he placed in the knight's hands a ruby ring, which, even in the moonlight, he had no difficulty to recognise as that which usually graced the finger of the high-born lady to whose service he had devoted himself. Could he have doubted the truth of the token, he would have been convinced by the small knot of carnation-coloured ribbon which was fastened to the ring. This was his lady's favourite colour, and more than once had he himself, assuming it for that of his own liveries, caused the carnation to triumph over all other hues in the lists and in the battle.

Sir Kenneth was struck nearly mute by seeing such a token in such hands.

'In the name of all that is sacred, from whom didst thou receive this witness?' said the knight. 'Bring, if thou canst, thy wavering understanding to a right settlement for a minute or two, and tell me the person by whom thou art sent, and the real purpose of thy message; and take heed what thou say'st, for this is no subject for buffoonery.'

'Fond and foolish knight,' said the dwarf, 'wouldst thou know more of this matter than that thou art honoured with commands from a princess, delivered to thee by a king? We list not to parley with thee farther than to command thee, in the name and by the power of that ring, to follow us to her who is the owner of the ring. Every minute that thou tarriest is a crime against thy allegiance.'

'Good Nectabanus, bethink thyself,' said the knight. 'Can my lady know where and upon what duty I am this night engaged? Is she aware that my life — pshaw, why should I speak of life? — but that my honour depends on my guarding this banner till daybreak, and can it be her wish that I should leave it even to pay homage to her? It is impossible; the princess is pleased to be merry with her servant, in sending him such a message, and I must think so the rather that she hath chosen such a messenger.'

'Oh, keep your belief,' said Nectabanus, turning round as if to leave the platform; 'it is little to me whether you be traitor or true man to this royal lady; so fare thee well.'

'Stay — stay — I entreat you stay,' said Sir Kenneth; 'answer me but one question — Is the lady who sent thee near to this place?'

'What signifies it?' said the dwarf. 'Ought fidelity to reckon furlongs, or miles, or leagues, like the poor courier, who is paid for his labour by the distance which he traverses? Nevertheless, thou soul of suspicion, I tell thee, the fair owner of the ring, now sent to so unworthy a vassal, in whom there is neither truth nor courage, is not more distant from this place than this arblast can send a bolt.'

The knight gazed again on the ring, as if to ascertain that there was no possible falsehood in the token. 'Tell me,' he said to the dwarf, 'is my presence required for any length of time?'

'Time!' answered Nectabanus, in his flighty manner; 'what call you time? I see it not — I feel it not; it is but a shadowy name — a succession of breathings measured forth by night by the clank of a bell, by day by a shadow crossing along a dial-

stone. Know'st thou not a true knight's time should only be reckoned by the deeds that he performs in behalf of God and his lady?'

'The words of truth, though in the mouth of folly,' said the knight. 'And doth my lady really summon me to some deed of action in her name and for her sake? and may it not be postponed for even the few hours till daybreak?'

'She requires thy presence instantly,' said the dwarf, 'and without the loss of so much time as would be told by ten grains of the sand-glass. Hearken, thou cold-blooded and suspicious knight, these are her very words — "Tell him that the hand which dropped roses can bestow laurels."'

This allusion to their meeting in the chapel of Engaddi sent a thousand recollections through Sir Kenneth's brain, and convinced him that the message delivered by the dwarf was genuine. The rosebuds, withered as they were, were still treasured under his cuirass, and nearest to his heart. He paused, and could not resolve to forego an opportunity — the only one which might ever offer — to gain grace in her eyes whom he had installed as sovereign of his affections. The dwarf, in the meantime, augmented his confusion by insisting either that he must return the ring or instantly attend him.

'Hold — hold — yet a moment hold,' said the knight, and proceeded to mutter to himself — 'Am I either the subject or slave of King Richard, more than as a free knight sworn to the service of the Crusade? And whom have I come hither to honour with lance and sword? Our holy cause and my transcendent lady!'

'The ring — the ring!' exclaimed the dwarf, impatiently — 'false and slothful knight, return the ring, which thou art unworthy to touch or to look upon.'

'A moment — a moment, good Nectabanus,' said Sir Kenneth; 'disturb not my thoughts. What if the Saracens were just now to attack our lines? Should I stay here like a sworn vassal of England, watching that her king's pride suffered no humiliation, or should I speed to the breach, and fight for the Cross? To the breach, assuredly; and next to the cause of God, come the commands of my liege lady. And yet, Cœur-de-Lion's behest — my own promise! Nectabanus, I conjure thee once more to say, are you to conduct me far from hence?'

'But to yonder pavilion; and, since you must needs know,' replied Nectabanus, 'the moon is glimmering on the gilded ball which crowns its roof, and which is worth a king's ransom.'

'I can return in an instant,' said the knight, shutting his eyes desperately to all farther consequences. 'I can hear from thence the bay of my dog, if any one approaches the standard; I will throw myself at my lady's feet, and pray her leave to return to conclude my watch. Here, Roswal (calling his hound, and throwing down his mantle by the side of the standard-spear), watch thou here, and let no one approach.'

The majestic dog looked in his master's face, as if to be sure that he understood his charge, then sat down beside the mantle, with ears erect and head raised, like a sentinel, understanding perfectly the purpose for which he was stationed there.

'Come now, good Nectabanus,' said the knight, 'let us hasten to obey the commands thou hast brought.'

'Haste he that will,' said the dwarf, sullenly; 'thou hast not been in haste to obey my summons, nor can I walk fast enough to follow your long strides: you do not walk like a man, but bound like an ostrich in the desert.'

There were but two ways of conquering the obstinacy of Nectabanus, who, as he spoke, diminished his walk into a snail pace. For bribes Sir Kenneth had no means, for soothing no time; so in his impatience he snatched the dwarf up from the ground, and bearing him along, notwithstanding his entreaties and his fear, reached nearly to the pavilion pointed out as that of the Queen. In approaching it, however, the Scot observed there was a small guard of soldiers sitting on the ground, who had been concealed from him by the intervening tents. Wondering that the clash of his own armour had not yet attracted their attention, and supposing that his motions might, on the present occasion, require to be conducted with secrecy, he placed the little panting guide upon the ground to recover his breath and point out what was next to be done. Nectabanus was both frightened and angry; but he had felt himself as completely in the power of the robust knight as an owl in the claws of an eagle, and therefore cared not to provoke him to any farther display of his strength.

He made no complaints, therefore, of the usage he had received, but turning amongst the labyrinth of tents, he led the knight in silence to the opposite side of the pavilion, which thus screened them from the observation of the warders, who seemed either too negligent or too sleepy to discharge their duty with much accuracy. Arrived there, the dwarf raised the under part of the canvas from the ground, and made signs to Sir Kenneth that he should introduce himself to the inside of the tent, by

creeping under it. The knight hesitated: there seemed an indecorum in thus privately introducing himself into a pavilion pitched, doubtless, for the accommodation of noble ladies; but he recalled to remembrance the assured tokens which the dwarf had exhibited, and concluded that it was not for him to dispute his lady's pleasure.

He stoopt accordingly, crept beneath the canvas inclosure of the tent, and heard the dwarf whisper from without — 'Remain there until I call thee.'

CHAPTER XIII

You talk of gaiety and innocence!
The moment when the fatal fruit was eaten,
They parted ne'er to meet again; and malice
Has ever since been playmate to light gaiety,
From the first moment when the smiling infant
Destroys the flower or butterfly he toys with
To the last chuckle of the dying miser,
Who on his deathbed laughs his last to hear
His wealthy neighbour has become a bankrupt.

Old Play.

SIR KENNETH was left for some minutes alone and in darkness. Here was another interruption, which must prolong his absence from his post, and he began almost to repent the facility with which he had been induced to quit it. But to return without seeing the Lady Edith was now not to be thought of. He had committed a breach of military discipline, and was determined at least to prove the reality of the seductive expectations which had tempted him to do so. Meanwhile, his situation was unpleasant. There was no light to show him into what sort of apartment he had been led; the Lady Edith was in immediate attendance on the Queen of England, and the discovery of his having introduced himself thus furtively into the royal pavilion might, were it discovered, lead to much and dangerous suspicion. While he gave way to these unpleasant reflections, and began almost to wish that he could achieve his retreat unobserved, he heard a noise of female voices, laughing, whispering, and speaking in an adjoining apartment, from which, as the sounds gave him reason to judge, he could only be separated by a canvas partition. Lamps were burning, as he might perceive by the shadowy light which extended itself even to his side of the veil which divided the tent, and he could see shades of several figures sitting and moving in the adjoining apartment. It cannot be termed discourtesy in Sir Kenneth that, situated as he was, he overheard a conversation in which he found himself deeply interested.

'Call her — call her, for Our Lady's sake,' said the voice of one of these laughing invisibles. 'Nectabanus, thou shalt be made ambassador to Prester John's court, to show them how wisely thou canst discharge thee of a mission.'

The shrill tone of the dwarf was heard, yet so much subdued, that Sir Kenneth could not understand what he said, except that he spoke something of the means of merriment given to the guard.

'But how shall we rid us of the spirit which Nectabanus hath raised, my maidens?'

'Hear me, royal madam,' said another voice; 'if the sage and princely Nectabanus be not over-jealous of his most transcendent bride and empress, let us send her to get us rid of this insolent knight-errant, who can be so easily persuaded that high-born dames may need the use of his insolent and overweening valour.'

'It were but justice, methinks,' replied another, 'that the Princess Guenevra should dismiss, by her courtesy, him whom her husband's wisdom has been able to entice hither.'

Struck to the heart with shame and resentment at what he had heard, Sir Kenneth was about to attempt his escape from the tent at all hazards, when what followed arrested his purpose.

'Nay, truly,' said the first speaker, 'our cousin Edith must first learn how this vaunted wight hath conducted himself, and we must reserve the power of giving her ocular proof that he hath failed in his duty. It may be a lesson will do good upon her; for, credit me, Calista, I have sometimes thought she has let this Northern adventurer sit nearer her heart than prudence would sanction.'

One of the other voices was then heard to mutter something of the Lady Edith's prudence and wisdom.

'Prudence, wench!' was the reply. 'It is mere pride, and the desire to be thought more rigid than any of us. Nay, I will not quit my advantage. You know well that, when she has us at fault, no one can, in a civil way, lay your error before you more precisely than can my Lady Edith. But here she comes.'

A figure, as if entering the apartment, cast upon the partition a shade, which glided along slowly until it mixed with those which already clouded it. Despite of the bitter disappointment which he had experienced, despite the insult and injury with which it seemed he had been visited by the malice, or, at best, by the idle humour, of Queen Berengaria (for he

already concluded that she who spoke loudest, and in a commanding tone, was the wife of Richard), the knight felt something so soothing to his feelings in learning that Edith had been no partner to the fraud practised on him, and so interesting to his curiosity in the scene which was about to take place, that, instead of prosecuting his more prudent purpose of an instant retreat, he looked anxiously, on the contrary, for some rent or crevice by means of which he might be made eye as well as ear-witness to what was to go forward.

'Surely,' said he to himself, 'the Queen, who hath been pleased for an idle frolic to endanger my reputation, and perhaps my life, cannot complain if I avail myself of the chance which fortune seems willing to afford me, to obtain knowledge of her further intentions.'

It seemed, in the meanwhile, as if Edith were waiting for the commands of the Queen, and as if the other were reluctant to speak, for fear of being unable to command her laughter and that of her companions; for Sir Kenneth could only distinguish a sound as of suppressed tittering and merriment.

'Your Majesty,' said Edith, at last, 'seems in a merry mood, though, methinks, the hour of night prompts a sleepy one. I was well disposed bedward, when I had your Majesty's commands to attend you.'

'I will not long delay you, cousin, from your repose,' said the Queen; 'though I fear you will sleep less soundly when I tell you your wager is lost.'

'Nay, royal madam,' said Edith, 'this, surely, is dwelling on a jest which has rather been worn out. I laid no wager, however it was your Majesty's pleasure to suppose, or to insist, that I did so.'

'Nay, now, despite our pilgrimage, Satan is strong with you, my gentle cousin, and prompts thee to leasing. Can you deny that you gaged your ruby ring against my golden bracelet that yonder Knight of the Libbard, or how call you him, could not be seduced from his post?'

'Your Majesty is too great for me to gainsay you,' replied Edith; 'but these ladies can, if they will, bear me witness that it was your Highness who proposed such a wager, and took the ring from my finger, even while I was declaring that I did not think it maidenly to gage anything on such a subject.'

'Nay, but, my Lady Edith,' said another voice, 'you must needs grant, under your favour, that you expressed yourself very confident of the valour of that same Knight of the Leopard.'

'And if I did, minion,' said Edith, angrily, 'is that a good reason why thou shouldst put in thy word to flatter her Majesty's humour? I spoke of that knight but as all men speak who have seen him in the field, and had no more interest in defending than thou in detracting from him. In a camp, what can women speak of save soldiers and deeds of arms?'

'The noble Lady Edith,' said a third voice, 'hath never forgiven Calista and me, since we told your Majesty that she dropped two rosebuds in the chapel.'

'If your Majesty,' said Edith, in a tone which Sir Kenneth could judge to be that of respectful remonstrance, 'have no other commands for me than to hear the gibes of your waiting-women, I must crave your permission to withdraw.'

'Silence, Florise,' said the Queen, 'and let not our indulgence lead you to forget the difference betwixt yourself and the kinswoman of England. But you, my dear cousin,' she continued, resuming her tone of raillery, 'how can you, who are so good-natured, begrudge us poor wretches a few minutes' laughing, when we have had so many days devoted to weeping and gnashing of teeth?'

'Great be your mirth, royal lady,' said Edith; 'yet would I be content not to smile for the rest of my life rather than ——'

She stopped, apparently out of respect; but Sir Kenneth could hear that she was in much agitation.

'Forgive me,' said Berengaria, a thoughtless but good-humoured princess of the house of Navarre; 'but what is the great offence after all? A young knight has been wiled hither; has stolen — or has *been* stolen — from his post, which no one will disturb in his absence, for the sake of a fair lady; for, to do your champion justice, sweet one, the wisdom of Nectabanus could conjure him hither in no name but yours.'

'Gracious Heaven! your Majesty does not say so?' said Edith, in a voice of alarm quite different from the agitation she had previously evinced — 'you cannot say so, consistently with respect for your own honour and for mine, your husband's kinswoman! Say you were jesting with me, my royal mistress, and forgive me that I could, even for a moment, think it possible you could be in earnest!'

'The Lady Edith,' said the Queen, in a displeased tone of voice, 'regrets the ring we have won of her. We will restore the pledge to you, gentle cousin, only you must not grudge us in turn a little triumph over the wisdom which has been so often spread over us, as a banner over a host.'

'A triumph!' exclaimed Edith, indignantly — 'a triumph! The triumph will be with the infidel, when he hears that the Queen of England can make the reputation of her husband's kinswoman the subject of a light frolic.'

'You are angry, fair cousin, at losing your favourite ring,' said the Queen. 'Come, since you grudge to pay your wager, we will renounce our right; it was your name and that pledge brought him hither, and we care not for the bait after the fish is caught.'

'Madam,' replied Edith, impatiently, 'you know well that your Grace could not wish for anything of mine but it becomes instantly yours. But I would give a bushel of rubies ere ring or name of mine had been used to bring a brave man into a fault, and perhaps to disgrace and punishment.'

'O, it is for the safety of our true knight that we fear!' said the Queen. 'You rate our power too low, fair cousin, when you speak of a life being lost for a frolic of ours. O, Lady Edith, others have influence on the iron breasts of warriors as well as you: the heart even of a lion is made of flesh, not of stone; and, believe me, I have interest enough with Richard to save this knight, in whose fate Lady Edith is so deeply concerned, from the penalty of disobeying his royal commands.'

'For the love of the blessed cross, most royal lady,' said Edith — and Sir Kenneth, with feelings which it were hard to unravel, heard her prostrate herself at the Queen's feet — 'for the love of our blessed Lady, and of every holy saint in the calendar, beware what you do! You know not King Richard — you have been but shortly wedded to him: your breath might as well combat the west wind when it is wildest as your words persuade my royal kinsman to pardon a military offence. Oh! for God's sake, dismiss this gentleman, if indeed you have lured him hither! I could almost be content to rest with the shame of having invited him, did I know that he was returned again where his duty calls him.'

'Arise, cousin — arise,' said Queen Berengaria, 'and be assured all will be better than you think. Rise, dear Edith; I am sorry I have played my foolery with a knight in whom you take such deep interest. Nay, wring not thy hands; I will believe thou carest not for him — believe anything rather than see thee look so wretchedly miserable. I tell thee I will take the blame on myself with King Richard in behalf of thy fair Northern friend — thine acquaintance, I would say, since thou own'st him not as a friend. Nay, look not so reproachfully.

We will send Nectabanus to dismiss this Knight of the Standard to his post; and we ourselves will grace him on some future day, to make amends for his wildgoose chase. He is, I warrant, but lying perdu in some neighbouring tent.'

'By my crown of lilies and my sceptre of a specially good water-reed,' said Nectabanus, 'your Majesty is mistaken: he is nearer at hand than you wot — he lieth ensconced there behind that canvas partition.'

'And within hearing of each word we have said!' exclaimed the Queen, in her turn violently surprised and agitated. 'Out, monster of folly and malignity!'

As she uttered these words, Nectabanus fled from the pavilion with a yell of such a nature as leaves it still doubtful whether Berengaria had confined her rebuke to words, or added some more emphatic expression of her displeasure.

'What can now be done?' said the Queen to Edith, in a whisper of undisguised uneasiness.

'That which must,' said Edith, firmly. 'We must see this gentleman, and place ourselves in his mercy.'

So saying, she began hastily to undo a curtain which at one place covered an entrance or communication.

'For Heaven's sake, forbear; consider,' said the Queen, 'my apartment — our dress — the hour — my honour!'

But ere she could detail her remonstrances, the curtain fell, and there was no division any longer betwixt the armed knight and the party of ladies. The warmth of an Eastern night occasioned the undress of Queen Berengaria and her household to be rather more simple and unstudied than their station, and the presence of a male spectator of rank, required. This the Queen remembered, and with a loud shriek fled from the apartment where Sir Kenneth was disclosed to view in a copartment of the ample pavilion, now no longer separated from that in which they stood. The grief and agitation of the Lady Edith, as well as the deep interest she felt in a hasty explanation with the Scottish knight, perhaps occasioned her forgetting that her locks were more dishevelled, and her person less heedfully covered, than was the wont of high-born damsels, in an age which was not, after all, the most prudish or scrupulous period of the ancient time. A thin loose garment of pink-coloured silk made the principal part of her vestments, with Oriental slippers, into which she had hastily thrust her bare feet, and a scarf hurriedly and loosely thrown about her shoulders. Her head had no other covering than the veil of rich and dishevelled

locks falling round it on every side, that half hid a countenance which a mingled sense of modesty, and of resentment, and other deep and agitating feelings, had covered with crimson.

But although Edith felt her situation with all that delicacy which is her sex's greatest charm, it did not seem that for a moment she placed her own bashfulness in comparison with the duty which, as she thought, she owed to him who had been led into error and danger on her account. She drew, indeed, her scarf more closely over her neck and bosom, and she hastily laid from her hand a lamp, which shed too much lustre over her figure; but, while Sir Kenneth stood motionless on the same spot in which he was first discovered, she rather stepped towards than retired from him, as she exclaimed, 'Hasten to your post, valiant knight; you are deceived in being trained hither. Ask no questions.'

'I need ask none,' said the knight, sinking upon one knee, with the reverential devotion of a saint at the altar, and bending his eyes on the ground, lest his looks should increase the lady's embarrassment.

'Have you heard all?' said Edith, impatiently. 'Gracious saints! then wherefore wait you here, when each minute that passes is loaded with dishonour?'

'I have heard that I am dishonoured, lady, and I have heard it from you,' answered Kenneth. 'What reck I how soon punishment follows? I have but one petition to you, and then I seek, among the sabres of the infidels, whether dishonour may not be washed out with blood.'

'Do not so, neither,' said the lady. 'Be wise: dally not here — all may yet be well, if you will but use despatch.'

'I wait but for your forgiveness,' said the knight, still kneeling, 'for my presumption in believing that my poor services could have been required or valued by you.

'I do forgive you. O, I have nothing to forgive! I have been the means of injuring you. But O, begone! I will forgive — I will value you — that is, as I value every brave Crusader — if you will but begone!'

'Receive, first, this precious yet fatal pledge,' said the knight, tendering the ring to Edith, who now showed gestures of impatience.

'Oh no — no,' she said, declining to receive it. 'Keep it — keep it as a mark of my regard — my regret, I would say. O begone, if not for your own sake, for mine!'

Almost recompensed for the loss even of honour, which her voice had denounced to him, by the interest which she seemed to testify in his safety, Sir Kenneth rose from his knee, and, casting a momentary glance on Edith, bowed low and seemed about to withdraw. At the same instant, that maidenly bashfulness, which the energy of Edith's feelings had till then triumphed over, became conqueror in its turn, and she hastened from the apartment, extinguishing her lamp as she went, and leaving, in Sir Kenneth's thoughts, both mental and natural gloom behind her.

She must be obeyed was the first distinct idea which waked him from his reverie, and he hastened to the place by which he had entered the pavilion. To pass under the canvas in the manner he had entered required time and attention, and he made a readier aperture by slitting the canvas wall with his poniard. When in the free air, he felt rather stupified and overpowered by a conflict of sensations than able to ascertain what was the real import of the whole. He was obliged to spur himself to action, by recollecting that the commands of the Lady Edith had required haste. Even then, engaged as he was amongst tent-ropes and tents, he was compelled to move with caution until he should regain the path or avenue aside from which the dwarf had led him, in order to escape the observation of the guards before the Queen's pavilion; and he was obliged also to move slowly, and with precaution, to avoid giving an alarm, either by falling or by the clashing of his armour. A thin cloud had obscured the moon, too, at the very instant of his leaving the tent, and Sir Kenneth had to struggle with this inconvenience at a moment when the dizziness of his head and the fulness of his heart scarce left him powers of intelligence sufficient to direct his motions.

But at once sounds came upon his ear which instantly recalled him to the full energy of his faculties. These proceeded from the Mount of St. George. He heard first a single fierce, angry, and savage bark, which was immediately followed by a yell of agony. No deer ever bounded with a wilder start at the voice of Roswal than did Sir Kenneth at what he feared was the death-cry of that noble hound, from whom no ordinary injury could have extracted even the slightest acknowledgment of pain. He surmounted the space which divided him from the avenue, and, having attained it, began to run towards the mount, although loaded with his mail, faster than most men could have accompanied him even if unarmed,

relaxed not his pace for the steep sides of the artificial mound, and in a few minutes stood on the platform upon its summit.

The moon broke forth at this moment, and showed him that the standard of England was vanished, that the spear on which it had floated lay broken on the ground, and beside it was his faithful hound, apparently in the agonies of death.

CHAPTER XIV

All my long arrear of honour lost,
Heap'd up in youth, and hoarded up for age!
Hath honour's fountain then suck'd up the stream?
He hath; and hooting boys may barefoot pass,
And gather pebbles from the naked ford.

Don Sebastian.

AFTER a torrent of afflicting sensations, by which he was at first almost stunned and confounded, Sir Kenneth's first thought was to look for the authors of this violation of the English banner; but in no direction could he see traces of them. His next, which to some persons, but scarce to any who have made intimate acquaintances among the canine race, may appear strange, was to examine the condition of his faithful Roswal, mortally wounded, as it seemed, in discharging the duty which his master had been seduced to abandon. He caressed the dying animal, who, faithful to the last, seemed to forget his own pain in the satisfaction he received from his master's presence, and continued wagging his tail and licking his hand, even while by low moanings he expressed that his agony was increased by the attempts which Sir Kenneth made to withdraw from the wound the fragment of the lance, or javelin, with which it had been inflicted; then redoubled his feeble endearments, as if fearing he had offended his master by showing a sense of the pain to which his interference had subjected him. There was something in the display of the dying creature's attachment which mixed as a bitter ingredient with the sense of disgrace and desolation by which Sir Kenneth was oppressed. His only friend seemed removed from him, just when he had incurred the contempt and hatred of all besides. The knight's strength of mind gave way to a burst of agonized distress, and he groaned and wept aloud.

While he thus indulged his grief, a clear and solemn voice, close beside him, pronounced these words in the sonorous tone

of the readers of the mosque, and in the *lingua franca*, mutually understood by Christians and Saracens:

'Adversity is like the period of the former and of the latter rain — cold, comfortless, unfriendly to man and to animal; yet from that season have their birth the flower and the fruit — the date, the rose, and the pomegranate.'

Sir Kenneth of the Leopard turned towards the speaker, and beheld the Arabian physician, who, approaching unheard, had seated himself a little behind him crossed-legged, and uttered with gravity, yet not without a tone of sympathy, the moral sentences of consolation with which the Koran and its commentators supplied him; for, in the East, wisdom is held to consist less in a display of the sage's own inventive talents than in his ready memory, and happy application of, and reference to, 'that which is written.'

Ashamed at being surprised in a womanlike expression of sorrow, Sir Kenneth dashed his tears indignantly aside, and again busied himself with his dying favourite.

'The poet hath said,' continued the Arab, without noticing the knight's averted looks and sullen deportment, 'the ox for the field and the camel for the desert. Were not the hand of the leech fitter than that of the soldier to cure wounds, though less able to inflict them?'

'This patient, Hakim, is beyond thy help,' said Sir Kenneth; 'and, besides, he is, by thy law, an unclean animal.'

'Where Allah hath deigned to bestow life, and a sense of pain and pleasure,' said the physician, 'it were sinful pride should the sage, whom He has enlightened, refuse to prolong existence or assuage agony. To the sage, the cure of a miserable groom, of a poor dog, and of a conquering monarch are events of little distinction. Let me examine this wounded animal.'

Sir Kenneth acceded in silence, and the physician inspected and handled Roswal's wound with as much care and attention as if he had been a human being. He then took forth a case of instruments, and, by the judicious and skilful application of pincers, withdrew from the wounded shoulder the fragment of the weapon, and stopped with styptics and bandages the effusion of blood which followed; the creature all the while suffering him patiently to perform these kind offices, as if he had been aware of his kind intentions.

'The animal may be cured,' said El Hakim, addressing himself to Sir Kenneth, 'if you will permit me to carry him to my

tent, and treat him with the care which the nobleness of his nature deserves. For know, that thy servant Adonbec is no less skilful in the race, and pedigree, and distinctions of good dogs and of noble steeds than in the diseases which affect the human race.'

'Take him with you,' said the knight. 'I bestow him on you freely if he recovers. I owe thee a reward for attendance on my squire, and have nothing else to pay it with. For myself, I will never again wind bugle or halloo to hound.'

The Arabian made no reply, but gave a signal with a clapping of his hands, which was instantly answered by the appearance of two black slaves. He gave them his orders in Arabic, received the answer, that 'to hear was to obey,' when, taking the animal in their arms, they removed him without much resistance on his part; for, though his eyes turned to his master, he was too weak to struggle.

'Fare thee well, Roswal, then,' said Sir Kenneth — 'fare thee well, my last and only friend; thou art too noble a possession to be retained by one such as I must in future call myself. I would,' he said, as the slaves retired, 'that, dying as he is, I could exchange conditions with that noble animal!'

'It is written,' answered the Arabian, although the exclamation had not been addressed to him, 'that all creatures are fashioned for the service of man; and the master of the earth speaketh folly when he would exchange, in his impatience, his hopes here and to come for the servile condition of an inferior being.'

'A dog who dies in discharging his duty,' said the knight, 'erily, 'is better than a man who survives the desertion of it. ave me, Hakim; thou hast, on this side of miracle, the most wonderful science which man ever possessed, but the wounds of the spirit are beyond thy power.'

'Not if the patient will explain his calamity, and be guided by the physician,' said Adonbec el Hakim.

'Know, then,' said Sir Kenneth, 'since thou art so importunate, that last night the banner of England was displayed from this mound — I was its appointed guardian; morning is now breaking — there lies the broken banner-spear, the standard itself is lost, and here sit I a living man!'

'How!' said El Hakim, examining him; 'thy armour is whole, there is no blood on thy weapons, and report speaks thee one unlikely to return thus from fight. Thou hast been trained from thy post — ay, trained by the rosy cheek and black

eye of one of those houris to whom you Nazarenes vow rather such service as is due to Allah than such love as may lawfully be rendered to forms of clay like our own. It has been thus assuredly; for so hath man ever fallen, even since the days of Sultan Adam.'

'And if it were so, physician,' said Sir Kenneth, sullenly, 'what remedy?'

'Knowledge is the parent of power,' said El Hakim, 'as valour supplies strength. Listen to me. Man is not as a tree, bound to one spot of earth; nor is he framed to cling to one bare rock, like the scarce animated shell-fish. Thine own Christian writings command thee, when persecuted in one city, to flee to another; and we Moslem also know that Mohammed, the Prophet of Allah, driven forth from the holy city of Mecca, found his refuge and his helpmat[illegible]t Medina.'

'And what does this concern me?' said the Scot.

'Much,' answered the physician. 'Even the sage flies the tempest which he cannot control. Use thy speed, therefore, and fly from the vengeance of Richard to the shadow of Saladin's victorious banner.'

'I might indeed hide my dishonour,' said Sir Kenneth, ironically, 'in a camp of infidel heathens where the very phrase is unknown. But had I not better partake more fully in their reproach? Does not thy advice stretch so far as to recommend me to take the turban? Methinks I want but apostasy to consummate my infamy.'

'Blaspheme not, Nazarene,' said the physician, sternly. 'Saladin makes no converts to the law of the Prophet, save those on whom its precepts shall work conviction. Open thine eyes to the light, and the great Soldan, whose liberality is as boundless as his power, may bestow on thee a kingdom; remain blinded if thou wilt, and, being one whose second life is doomed to misery, Saladin will yet, for this span of present time, make thee rich and happy. But fear not that thy brows shall be bound with the turban, save at thine own free choice.'

'My choice were rather,' said the knight, 'that my writhen features should blacken, as they are like to do, in this evening's setting sun.'

'Yet thou art not wise, Nazarene,' said El Hakim, 'to reject this fair offer; for I have power with Saladin, and can raise thee high in his grace. Look you, my son; this Crusade, as you call your wild enterprise, is like a large dromond parting asunder in the waves. Thou thyself hast borne terms of truce

from the kings and princes whose force is here assembled to the mighty Soldan, and knew'st not, perchance, the full tenor of thine own errand.'

'I knew not, and I care not,' said the knight, impatiently; 'what avails it to me that I have been of late the envoy of princes, when, ere night, I shall be a gibbeted and dishonoured corse?'

'Nay, I speak that it may not be so with thee,' said the physician. 'Saladin is courted on all sides: the combined princes of this league formed against him have made such proposals of composition and peace as, in other circumstances, it might have become his honour to have granted to them. Others have made private offers, on their own separate account, to disjoin their forces from the camp of the kings of Frangistan, and even to lend their arms to the defence of the standard of the Prophet. But Saladin will not be served by such treacherous and interested defection. The King of Kings will treat only with the Lion King: Saladin will hold treaty with none but the Melech Ric, and with him he will treat like a prince, or fight like a champion. To Richard he will yield such conditions of his free liberality as the swords of all Europe could never compel from him by force or terror. He will permit a free pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and all the places where the Nazarenes list to worship; nay, he will so far share even his empire with his brother Richard, that he will allow Christian garrisons in the six strongest cities of Palestine, and one in Jerusalem itself, and suffer them to be under the immediate command of the officers of Richard, who, he consents, shall bear the name of King Guardian of Jerusalem. Yet farther, strange and incredible as you may think it, know, sir knight — for to your honour I can commit even that almost incredible secret — know that Saladin will put a sacred seal on this happy union betwixt the bravest and noblest of Frangistan and Asia, by raising to the rank of his royal spouse a Christian damsel, allied in blood to King Richard, and known by the name of the Lady Edith of Plantagenet.'[1]

'Ha! say'st thou?' exclaimed Sir Kenneth, who, listening with indifference and apathy to the preceding part of El Hakim's speech, was touched by this last communication, as the thrill o nerve, unexpectedly jarred, will awaken the sensation of agony, even in the torpor of palsy. Then, moderating his tone by dint of much effort, he restrained his indignation, and, ve[illegible]; it

[1] See Proposal of Marriage. Note 7.

under the appearance of contemptuous doubt, he prosecuted the conversation, in order to get as much knowledge as possible of the plot, as he deemed it, against the honour and happiness of her whom he loved not the less that his passion had ruined, apparently, his fortunes, at once, and his honour. 'And what Christian,' he said, with tolerable calmness, 'would sanction a union so unnatural as that of a Christian maiden with an unbelieving Saracen?'

'Thou art but an ignorant, bigoted Nazarene,' said the Hakim. 'Seest thou not how the Mohammedan princes daily intermarry with the noble Nazarene maidens in Spain, without scandal either to Moor or Christian? And the noble Soldan will, in his full confidence in the blood of Richard, permit the English maid the freedom which your Frankish manners have assigned to women. He will allow her the free exercise of her religion — seeing that, in very truth, it signifies but little to which faith females are addicted — and he will assign her such place and rank over all the women of his zenana, that she shall be in every respect his sole and absolute queen.'

'What!' said Sir Kenneth, 'darest thou think, Moslem, that Richard would give his kinswoman — a high-born and virtuous princess — to be, at best, the foremost concubine in the haram of a misbeliever? Know, Hakim, the meanest free Christian noble would scorn, on his child's behalf, such splendid ignominy.'

'Thou errest,' said the Hakim: 'Philip of France, and Henry of Champagne, and others of Richard's principal allies, have heard the proposal without starting, and have promised, as far as they may, to forward an alliance that may end these wasteful wars; and the wise arch-priest of Tyre hath undertaken to break the proposal to Richard, not doubting that he shall be able to bring the plan to good issue. The Soldan's wisdom hath as yet kept his proposition secret from others, such as he of Montserrat and the Master of the Templars, because he knows they seek to thrive by Richard's death or disgrace, not by his life or honour. Up, therefore, sir knight, and to horse. I will give thee a scroll which shall advance thee highly with the Soldan; and deem not that you are leaving your country, or her cause, or her religion, since the interest of the two monarchs will speedily be the same. To Saladin thy counsel will be most acceptable, since thou canst make him aware of much concerning the marriages of the Christians, the treatment of their wives, and other points of their laws and usages, which, in the course of such treaty, it much concerns him that he

should know. The right hand of the Soldan grasps the treasures of the East, and it is the fountain of generosity. Or, if thou desirest it, Saladin, when allied with England, can have but little difficulty to obtain from Richard not only thy pardon and restoration to favour, but an honourable command in the troops which may be left of the King of England's host to maintain their joint government in Palestine. Up, then, and mount; there lies a plain path before thee.'

'Hakim,' said the Scottish knight, 'thou art a man of peace; also, thou hast saved the life of Richard of England, and, moreover, of my own poor esquire, Strauchan. I have, therefore, heard to an end a matter which, being propounded by another Moslem than thyself, I would have cut short with a blow of my dagger. Hakim, in return for thy kindness, I advise thee to see that the Saracen who shall propose to Richard a union betwixt the blood of Plantagenet and that of his accursed race do put on a helmet which is capable to endure such a blow of a battle-axe as that which struck down the gate of Acre. Certes, he will be otherwise placed beyond the reach even of thy skill.'

'Thou art, then, wilfully determined not to fly to the Saracen host?' said the physician. 'Yet, remember, thou stayest to certain destruction; and the writings of thy law, as well as ours, prohibit man from breaking into the tabernacle of his own life.'

'God forbid!' replied the Scot, crossing himself; 'but we are also forbidden to avoid the punishment which our crimes have deserved. And, since so poor are thy thoughts of fidelity, Hakim, it grudges me that I have bestowed my good hound on thee, for, should he live, he will have a master ignorant of his value.'

'A gift that is begrudged is already recalled,' said El Hakim, 'only we physicians are sworn not to send away a patient uncured. If the dog recover, he is once more yours.'

'Go to, Hakim,' answered Sir Kenneth; 'men speak not of hawk and hound when there is but an hour of day-breaking betwixt them and death. Leave me to recollect my sins and reconcile myself to Heaven.'

'I leave thee in thine obstinacy,' said the physician: 'the mist hides the precipice from those who are doomed to fall over it.'

He withdrew slowly, turning from time to time his head, as if to observe whether the devoted knight might not recall him

either by word or signal. At last his turbaned figure was lost among the labyrinth of tents which lay extended beneath, whitening in the pale light of the dawning, before which the moonbeam had now faded away.

But although the physician Adonbec's words had not made that impression upon Kenneth which the sage desired, they had inspired the Scot with a motive for desiring life, which, dishonoured as he conceived himself to be, he was before willing to part from as from a sullied vestment no longer becoming his wear. Much that had passed betwixt himself and the hermit, besides what he had observed between the anchorite and Sheerkohf (or Ilderim), he now recalled to recollection, and [all] tended to confirm what the Hakim had told him of the secret article of the treaty.

'The reverend impostor!' he exclaimed to himself — 'the hoary hypocrite! He spoke of the unbelieving husband converted by the believing wife; and what do I know but that the traitor exhibited to the Saracen, accursed of God, the beauties of Edith Plantagenet, that the hound might judge if the princely Christian lady were fit to be admitted into the haram of a misbeliever? If I had yonder infidel Ilderim, or whatsoever he is called, again in the gripe with which I once held him fast as ever hound held hare, never again should *he* at least come on errand disgraceful to the honour of Christian king or noble and virtuous maiden. But I — my hours are fast dwindling into minutes; yet, while I have life and breath, something must be done, and speedily.'

He paused for a few minutes, threw from him his helmet, then strode down the hill, and took the road to King Richard's pavilion.

CHAPTER XV

The feather'd songster, chanticleer,
Had wound his bugle-horn,
And told the early villager
The coming of the morn.
King Edward saw the ruddy streaks
Of light eclipse the grey,
And heard the raven's croaking throat
Proclaim the fated day.
'Thou 'rt right,' he said, 'for, by the God
That sits enthroned on high,
Charles Bawdwin, and his fellows twain,
This day shall surely die.'

CHATTERTON.

ON the evening on which Sir Kenneth assumed his post, Richard, after the stormy event which disturbed its tranquillity, had retired to rest in the plenitude of confidence inspired by his unbounded courage, and the superiority which he had displayed in carrying the point he aimed at in presence of the whole Christian host and its leaders, many of whom, he was aware, regarded in their secret souls the disgrace of the Austrian Duke as a triumph over themselves; so that his pride felt gratified that, in prostrating one enemy, he had mortified a hundred.

Another monarch would have doubled his guards on the evening after such a scene, and kept at least a part of his troops under arms. But Cœur-de-Lion dismissed, upon the occasion, even his ordinary watch, and assigned to his soldiers a donative of wine to celebrate his recovery, and to drink to the banner of St. George; and his quarter of the camp would have assumed a character totally devoid of vigilance and military preparation, but that Sir Thomas de Vaux, the Earl of Salisbury, and other nobles, took precautions to preserve order and discipline among the revellers.

The physician attended the King from his retiring to bed till midnight was past, and twice administered medicine to

him during that period, always previously observing the quarter of heaven occupied by the full moon, whose influences he declared to be most sovereign, or most baleful, to the effect of his drugs. It was three hours after midnight ere El Hakim withdrew from the royal tent, to one which had been pitched for himself and his retinue. In his way thither he visited the tent of Sir Kenneth of the Leopard, in order to see the condition of his first patient in the Christian camp, old Strauchan, as the knight's esquire was named. Inquiring there for Sir Kenneth himself, El Hakim learned on what duty he was employed, and probably this information led him to St. George's Mount, where he found him whom he sought in the disastrous circumstances alluded to in the last chapter.

It was about the hour of sunrise, when a slow, armed tread was heard approaching the King's pavilion; and ere De Vaux, who slumbered beside his master's bed as lightly as ever sleep sat upon the eyes of a watch-dog, had time to do more than arise and say, 'Who comes?' the Knight of the Leopard entered the tent, with a deep and devoted gloom seated upon his manly features.

'Whence this bold intrusion, sir knight?' said De Vaux, sternly, yet in a tone which respected his master's slumbers.

'Hold! De Vaux,' said Richard, awaking on the instant; 'Sir Kenneth cometh like a good soldier to render an account of his guard; to such the general's tent is ever accessible.' Then rising from his slumbering posture, and leaning on his elbow, he fixed his large bright eye upon the warrior 'Speak, sir Scot; thou comest to tell me of a vigilant, safe, and honourable watch, dost thou not? The rustling of the folds of the banner of England were enough to guard it, even without the body of such a knight as men hold thee.'

'As men will hold me no more,' said Sir Kenneth. 'My watch hath neither been vigilant, safe, nor honourable. The banner of England has been carried off.'

'And thou alive to tell it?' said Richard, in a tone of derisive incredulity. 'Away, it cannot be. There is not even a scratch on thy face. Why dost thou stand thus mute? Speak the truth; it is ill jesting with a king, yet I will forgive thee if thou hast lied.'

'Lied, Sir King!' returned the unfortunate knight, with fierce emphasis, and one glance of fire from his eye, bright and transient as the flash from the cold and stony flint. 'But this also must be endured. I have spoken the truth.'

'By God and by St. George!' said the King, bursting into fury, which, however, he instantly checked. 'De Vaux, go view the spot. This fever has disturbed his brain. This cannot be. The man's courage is proof. It *cannot* be! Go speedily; or send, if thou wilt not go.'

The King was interrupted by Sir Henry Neville, who came, breathless, to say that the banner was gone, and the knight who guarded it overpowered, and most probably murdered, as there was a pool of blood where the banner-spear lay shivered.

'But whom do I see here?' said Neville, his eyes suddenly resting upon Sir Kenneth.

'A traitor,' said the King, starting to his feet, and seizing the curtal axe, which was ever near his bed — 'a traitor, whom thou shalt see die a traitor's death.' And he drew back the weapon as in act to strike.

Colourless, but firm as a marble statue, the Scot stood before him, with his bare head uncovered by any protection, his eyes cast down to the earth, his lips scarcely moving, yet muttering probably in prayer. Opposite to him, and within the due reach for a blow, stood King Richard, his large person wrapt in the folds of his camiscia, or ample gown of linen, except where the violence of his action had flung the covering from his right arm, shoulder, and a part of his breast, leaving to view a specimen of a frame which might have merited his Saxon predecessor's epithet of Ironside. He stood for an instant, prompt to strike; then sinking the head of the weapon towards the ground, he exclaimed, 'But there was blood, Neville — there was blood upon the place. Hark thee, sir Scot, brave thou wert once, for I have seen thee fight. Say thou hast slain two of the thieves in defence of the standard — say but one — say thou hast struck but a good blow in our behalf, and get thee out of the camp with thy life and thy infamy!'

'You have called me liar, my Lord King,' replied Kenneth, firmly; 'and therein, at least, you have done me wrong. Know, that there was no blood shed in defence of the standard save that of a poor hound, which, more faithful than his master, defended the charge which he deserted.'

'Now, by St. George!' said Richard, again heaving up his arm. But De Vaux threw himself between the King and the object of his vengeance, and spoke with the blunt truth of his character — 'My liege, this must not be — here — nor by your own hand. It is enough of folly for one night and day to have

entrusted your banner to a Scot; said I not they were ever fair and false?'[1]

'Thou didst, De Vaux; thou wast right, and I confess it,' said Richard. 'I should have known him better — I should have remembered how the Fox William deceived me touching this Crusade.'

'My lord,' said Sir Kenneth, 'William of Scotland never deceived; but circumstances prevented his bringing his forces.'

'Peace, shameless!' said the King; 'thou sullicst the name of a prince, even by speaking it. And yet, De Vaux, it is strange,' he added, 'to see the bearing of the man. Coward or traitor he must be, yet he abode the blow of Richard Plantagenet, as our arm had been raised to lay knighthood on his shoulder. Had he shown the slightest sign of fear — had but a joint trembled, or an eyelid quivered — I had shattered his head like a crystal goblet. But I cannot strike where there is neither fear nor resistance.'

There was a pause.

'My lord ——' said Kenneth.

'Ha!' replied Richard, interrupting him, 'hast thou found thy speech? Ask grace from Heaven, but none from me, for England is dishonoured through thy fault; and wert thou mine own and only brother, there is no pardon for thy fault.'

'I speak not to demand grace of mortal man,' said the Scot; 'it is in your Grace's pleasure to give or refuse me time for Christian shrift; if man denies it, may God grant me the absolution which I would otherwise ask of His church! But whether I die on the instant or half an hour hence, I equally beseech your Grace for one moment's opportunity to speak that to your royal person which highly concerns your fame as a Christian king.'

'Say on,' said the King, making no doubt that he was about to hear some confession concerning the loss of the banner.

'What I have to speak,' said Sir Kenneth, 'touches the royalty of England, and must be said to no ears but thine own.'

'Begone with yourselves, sirs,' said the King to Neville and De Vaux.

The first obeyed, but the latter would not stir from the King's presence.

'If you said I was in the right,' replied De Vaux to his sovereign, 'I will be treated as one should be who hath been

[1] See Scots, Fair and False. Note 8.

found to be right — that is, I will have my own will. I leave you not with this false Scot.'

'How! De Vaux,' said Richard, angrily, and stamping slightly, 'darest thou not venture our person with one traitor?'

'It is in vain you frown and stamp, my lord,' said De Vaux; 'I venture not a sick man with a sound one, a naked man with one armed in proof.'

'It matters not,' said the Scottish knight; 'I seek no excuse to put off time, I will speak in presence of the Lord of Gilsland. He is good lord and true.'

'But half an hour since,' said De Vaux, with a groan, implying a mixture of sorrow and vexation, 'and I had said as much for thee.'

'There is treason around you, King of England,' continued Sir Kenneth.

'It may well be as thou say'st,' replied Richard, 'I have a pregnant example.'

''Treason that will injure thee more deeply than the loss of an hundred banners in a pitched field. The — the' — Sir Kenneth hesitated, and at length continued, in a lower tone — 'the Lady Edith ——'

'Ha!' said the King, drawing himself suddenly into a state of haughty attention, and fixing his eye firmly on the supposed criminal. 'What of her? — what of her? — what has she to do with this matter?'

'My lord,' said the Scot, 'there is a scheme on foot to disgrace your royal lineage, by bestowing the hand of the Lady Edith on the Saracen Soldan, and thereby to purchase a peace most dishonourable to Christendom, by an alliance most shameful to England.'

This communication had precisely the contrary effect from that which Sir Kenneth expected. Richard Plantagenet was one of those who, in Iago's words, would not serve God because it was the devil who bade him: advice or information often affected him less according to its real import than through the tinge which it took from the supposed character and views of those by whom it was communicated. Unfortunately, the mention of his relative's name renewed his recollection of what he had considered as extreme presumption in the Knight of the Leopard, even when he stood high in the rolls of chivalry, but which, in his present condition, appeared an insult sufficient to drive the fiery monarch into a frenzy of passion.

'Silence,' he said, 'infamous and audacious! By Heaven, I

will have thy tongue torn out with hot pincers, for mentioning the very name of a noble Christian damsel. Know, degenerate traitor, that I was already aware to what height thou hadst dared to raise thine eyes, and endured it, though it were insolence, even when thou hadst cheated us — for thou art all a deceit — into holding thee as of some name and fame. But now, with lips blistered with the confession of thine own dishonour — that thou shouldst *now* dare to name our noble kinswoman as one in whose fate thou hast part or interest! What is it to thee if she marry Saracen or Christian? What is it to thee if, in a camp where princes turn cowards by day and robbers by night — where brave knights turn to paltry deserters and traitors — what is it, I say, to thee or any one, if I should please to ally myself to truth and to valour in the person of Saladin?'

'Little to me, indeed, to whom all the world will soon be as nothing,' answered Sir Kenneth, boldly; 'but were I now stretched on the rack, I would tell thee, that what I have said is much to thine own conscience and thine own fame. I tell thee, sir king, that if thou dost but in thought entertain the purpose of wedding thy kinswoman, the Lady Edith ——'

'Name her not — and for an instant think not of her,' said the King, again straining the curtal axe in his gripe, until the muscles started above his brawny arm, like cordage formed by the ivy around the limb of an oak.

'Not name — not think of her!' answered Sir Kenneth, his spirits, stunned as they were by self-depression, beginning to recover their elasticity from this species of controversy. 'Now, by the Cross, on which I place my hope, her name shall be the last word in my mouth, her image the last thought in my mind. Try thy boasted strength on this bare brow, and see if thou canst prevent my purpose.'

'He will drive me mad!' said Richard, who, in his despite, was once more staggered in his purpose by the dauntless determination of the criminal.

Ere Thomas of Gilsland could reply, some bustle was heard without, and the arrival of the Queen was announced from the outer part of the pavilion.

'Detain her — detain her, Neville,' cried the King; 'this is no sight for women. Fie, that I have suffered such a paltry traitor to chafe me thus! Away with him, De Vaux,' he whispered, 'through the back entrance of our tent; coop him up close, and answer for his safe custody with your life. And

harkye, he is presently to die; let him have a ghostly father —we would not kill soul and body. And stay, hark thee, we will not have him dishonoured: he shall die knightlike, in his belt and spurs; for if his treachery be as black as hell, his boldness may match that of the devil himself.'

De Vaux, right glad, if the truth may be guessed, that the scene ended without Richard's descending to the unkingly act of himself slaying an unresisting prisoner, made haste to remove Sir Kenneth by a private issue to a separate tent, where he was disarmed and put in fetters for security. De Vaux looked on with a steady and melancholy attention, while the provost's officers, to whom Sir Kenneth was now committed, took these severe precautions.

When they were ended, he said solemnly to the unhappy criminal, 'It is King Richard's pleasure that you die undegraded, without mutilation of your body or shame to your arms, and that your head be severed from the trunk by the sword of the executioner.'

'It is kind,' said the knight, in a low and rather submissive tone of voice, as one who received an unexpected favour; 'my family will not then hear the worst of the tale. Oh, my father —my father!'

This muttered invocation did not escape the blunt but kindly-natured Englishman, and he brushed the back of his large hand over his rough features, ere he could proceed.

'It is Richard of England's farther pleasure,' he said, at length, 'that you have speech with a holy man, and I have met on the passage hither with a Carmelite friar, who may fit you for your passage. He waits without, until you are in a frame of mind to receive him.'

'Let it be instantly,' said the knight. 'In this also Richard is kind. I cannot be more fit to see the good father at any time than now; for life and I have taken farewell, as two travellers who have arrived at the crossway, where their roads separate.'

'It is well,' said De Vaux, slowly and solemnly; 'for it irks me somewhat to say that which sums my message. It is King Richard's pleasure that you prepare for instant death.'

'God's pleasure and the King's be done,' replied the knight, patiently. 'I neither contest the justice of the sentence nor desire delay of the execution.'

De Vaux began to leave the tent, but very slowly; paused at the door, and looked back at the Scot, from whose aspect

thoughts of the world seemed banished, as if he was composing himself into deep devotion. The feelings of the stout English baron were in general none of the most acute, and yet, on the present occasion, his sympathy overpowered him in an unusual manner. He came hastily back to the bundle of reeds on which the captive lay, took one of his fettered hands, and said, with as much softness as his rough voice was capable of expressing, 'Sir Kenneth, thou art yet young — thou hast a father. My Ralph, whom I left training his little Galloway nag on the banks of the Irthing, may one day attain thy years; and, but for last night, would to God I saw his youth bear such promise as thine! Can nothing be said or done in thy behalf?'

'Nothing,' was the melancholy answer. 'I have deserted my charge — the banner entrusted to me is lost. When the headsman and block are prepared, the head and trunk are ready to part company.'

'Nay, then, God have mercy!' said De Vaux; 'yet would I rather than my best horse I had taken that watch myself There is mystery in it, young man, as a plain man may descry, though he cannot see through it. Cowardice? pshaw! No coward ever fought as I have seen thee do. Treachery? I cannot think traitors die in their treason so calmly. Thou hast been trained from thy post by some deep guile — some well-devised stratagem: the cry of some distressed maiden has caught thine ear, or the laughful look of some merry one has taken thine eye. Never blush for it, we have all been led aside by such gear. Come, I pray thee, make a clean conscience of it to me, instead of the priest. Richard is merciful when his mood is abated. Hast thou nothing to entrust to me?'

The unfortunate knight turned his face from the kind warrior, and answered, 'NOTHING.'

And De Vaux, who had exhausted his topics of persuasion, arose and left the tent, with folded arms, and in melancholy deeper than he thought the occasion merited, even angry with himself to find that so simple a matter as the death of a Scottishman could affect him so nearly.

'Yet,' as he said to himself, 'though the rough-footed knaves be our enemies in Cumberland, in Palestine one almost considers them as brethren.'

CHAPTER XVI

'T is not her sense — for sure, in that
There 's nothing more than common ;
And all her wit is only chat,
Like any other woman.

Song.

THE high-born Berengaria, daughter of Sanchez, King of Navarre, and the Queen-Consort of the heroic Richard, was accounted one of the most beautiful women of the period. Her form was slight, though exquisitely moulded. She was graced with a complexion not common in her country, a profusion of fair hair, and features so extremely juvenile as to make her look several years younger than she really was, though in reality she was not above one-and-twenty. Perhaps it was under the consciousness of this extremely juvenile appearance that she affected, or at least practised, a little childish petulance and wilfulness of manner, not unbefitting, she might suppose, a youthful bride, whose rank and age gave her a right to have her fantasies indulged and attended to. She was by nature perfectly good-humoured, and if her due share of admiration and homage (in her opinion a very large one) was duly resigned to her, no one could possess better temper or a more friendly disposition ; but then, like all despots, the more power that was voluntarily yielded to her, the more she desired to extend her sway. Sometimes, even when all her ambition was gratified, she chose to be a little out of health and a little out of spirits ; and physicians had to toil their wits to invent names for imaginary maladies, while her ladies racked their imagination for new games, new gadgear, and new court-scandal, to pass away those unpleasant hours, during which their own situation was scarce to be greatly envied. Their most frequent resource for diverting this malady was some trick, or piece of mischief, practised upon each other ; and the good queen, in the buoyancy of her reviving spirits, was, to speak truth, rather too indifferent

whether the frolics thus practised were entirely befitting her own dignity, or whether the pain which those suffered upon whom they were inflicted was not beyond the proportion of pleasure which she herself derived from them. She was confident in her husband's favour, in her high rank, and in her supposed power to make good whatever such pranks might cost others. In a word, she gamboled with the freedom of a young lioness, who is unconscious of the weight of her own paws when laid on those whom she sports with.

The Queen Berengaria loved her husband passionately, but she feared the loftiness and roughness of his character, and as she felt herself not to be his match in intellect, was not much pleased to see that he would often talk with Edith Plantagenet in preference to herself, simply because he found more amusement in her conversation, a more comprehensive understanding, and a more noble cast of thoughts and sentiments, than his beautiful consort exhibited. Berengaria did not hate Edith on this account, far less meditate her any harm; for, allowing for some selfishness, her character was, on the whole, innocent and generous. But the ladies of her train, sharp-sighted in such matters, had for some time discovered that a poignant jest at the expense of the Lady Edith was a specific for relieving her Grace of England's low spirits, and the discovery saved their imagination much toil.

There was something ungenerous in this, because the Lady Edith was understood to be an orphan; and though she was called Plantagenet, and the Fair Maid of Anjou, and admitted by Richard to certain privileges only granted to the royal family, and held her place in the circle accordingly, yet few knew, and none acquainted with the court of England ventured to ask, in what exact degree of relationship she stood to Cœur-de-Lion. She had come with Eleanor, the celebrated Queen-Mother of England, and joined Richard at Messina, as one of the ladies destined to attend on Berengaria, whose nuptials then approached. Richard treated his kinswoman with much respectful observance, and the Queen made her her most constant attendant, and, even in despite of the petty jealousy which we have observed, treated her, generally, with suitable respect.

The ladies of the household had, for a long time, no further advantage over Edith than might be afforded by an opportunity of censuring a less artfully-disposed head-attire or an unbecoming robe; for the lady was judged to be inferior in these mysteries. The silent devotion of the Scottish knight

did not, indeed, pass unnoticed: his liveries, his cognizances, his feats of arms, his mottoes and devices, were nearly watched, and occasionally made the subject of a passing jest. But then came the pilgrimage of the Queen and her ladies to Engaddi — a journey which the Queen had undertaken under a vow for the recovery of her husband's health, and which she had been encouraged to carry into effect by the Archbishop of Tyre for a political purpose. It was then, and in the chapel at that holy place, connected from above with a Carmelite nunnery, from beneath with the cell of the anchorite, that one of the Queen's attendants remarked that secret sign of intelligence which Edith had made to her lover, and failed not instantly to communicate it to her Majesty. The Queen returned from her pilgrimage enriched with this admirable recipe against dulness or *ennui*, and her train was at the same time augmented by a present of two wretched dwarfs from the dethroned Queen of Jerusalem, as deformed and as crazy (the excellence of that unhappy species) as any queen could have desired. One of Berengaria's idle amusements had been to try the effect of the sudden appearance of such ghastly and fantastic forms on the nerves of the knight when left alone in the chapel; but the jest had been lost by the composure of the Scot and the interference of the anchorite. She had now tried another, of which the consequences promised to be more serious.

The ladies again met after Sir Kenneth had retired from the tent; and the Queen, at first little moved by Edith's angry expostulations, only replied to her by upbraiding her prudery, and by indulging her wit at the expense of the garb, nation, and, above all, the poverty, of the Knight of the Leopard, in which she displayed a good deal of playful malice, mingled with some humour, until Edith was compelled to carry her anxiety to her separate apartment. But when, in the morning, a female, whom Edith had entrusted to make inquiry, brought word that the standard was missing, and its champion vanished, she burst into the Queen's apartment, and implored her to rise and proceed to the King's tent without delay, and use her powerful mediation to prevent the evil consequences of her jest.

The Queen, frightened in her turn, cast, as is usual, the blame of her own folly on those around her, and endeavoured to comfort Edith's grief, and appease her displeasure, by a thousand inconsistent arguments. She was sure no harm had chanced: the knight was sleeping, she fancied, after his night

watch. What though, for fear of the King's displeasure, he had deserted with the standard — it was but a piece of silk, and he but a needy adventurer; or, if he was put under warding for a time, she would soon get the King to pardon him — it was but waiting to let Richard's mood pass away.

Thus she continued talking thick and fast, and heaping together all sorts of inconsistencies, with the vain expectation of persuading both Edith and herself that no harm could come of a frolic which in her heart she now bitterly repented. But while Edith in vain strove to intercept this torrent of idle talk, she caught the eye of one of the ladies who entered the Queen's apartment. There was death in her look of affright and horror, and Edith, at the first glance of her countenance, had sunk at once on the earth, had not strong necessity, and her own elevation of character, enabled her to maintain at least external composure.

'Madam,' she said to the Queen, 'lose not another word in speaking, but save life; if, indeed,' she added, her voice choking as she said it, 'life may yet be saved.'

'It may be — it may,' answered the Lady Calista. 'I have just heard that he has been brought before the King; it is not yet over, but,' she added, bursting into a vehement flood of weeping, in which personal apprehensions had some share, 'it will soon, unless some course be taken.'

'I will vow a golden candlestick to the Holy Sepulchre — a shrine of silver to our Lady of Engaddi — a pall, worth one hundred bezants, to St. Thomas of Orthez,' said the Queen, in extremity.

'Up — up, madam!' said Edith; 'call on the saints if you list, but be your own best saint.'

'Indeed, madam,' said the terrified attendant, 'the Lady Edith speaks truth. Up, madam, and let us to King Richard's tent, and beg the poor gentleman's life.'

'I will go — I will go instantly,' said the Queen, rising and trembling excessively; while her women, in as great confusion as herself, were unable to render her those duties which were indispensable to her levee. Calm, composed, only pale as death, Edith ministered to the Queen with her own hand, and alone supplied the deficiencies of her numerous attendants.

'How you wait, wenches!' said the Queen, not able even then to forget frivolous distinctions. 'Suffer ye the Lady Edith to do the duties of your attendance? Seest thou, Edith, they can do nothing: I shall never be attired in time. We

will send for the Archbishop of Tyre, and employ him as a mediator.'

'O no — no!' exclaimed Edith. 'Go yourself, madam; you have done the evil, do you confer the remedy.'

'I will go — I will go,' said the Queen; 'but if Richard be in his mood, I dare not speak to him; he will kill me!'

'Yet go, gracious madam,' said the Lady Calista, who best knew her mistress's temper; 'not a lion, in his fury, could look upon such a face and form, and retain so much as an angry thought, far less a love-true knight like the royal Richard, to whom your slightest word would be a command.'

'Dost thou think so, Calista?' said the Queen. 'Ah, thou little knowest — yet I will go. But see you here — what means this? You have bedizened me in green, a colour he detests. Lo you! let me have a blue robe, and — search for the ruby carcanet, which was part of the King of Cyprus's ransom; it is either in the steel-casket or somewhere else.'

'This, and a man's life at stake!' said Edith, indignantly; 'it passes human patience. Remain at your ease, madam; I will go to King Richard. I am a party interested; I will know if the honour of a poor maiden of his blood is to be so far tampered with, that her name shall be abused to train a brave gentleman from his duty, bring him within the compass of death and infamy, and make, at the same time, the glory of England a laughing-stock to the whole Christian army.'

At this unexpected burst of passion, Berengaria listened with an almost stupified look of fear and wonder. But as Edith was about to leave the tent, she exclaimed, though faintly, 'Stop her — stop her!'

'You must indeed stop, noble Lady Edith,' said Calista, taking her arm gently; 'and you, royal madam, I am sure, will go, and without farther dallying. If the Lady Edith goes alone to the King, he will be dreadfully incensed, nor will it be one life that will stay his fury.'

'I will go — I will go,' said the Queen, yielding to necessity; and Edith reluctantly halted to wait her movements.

They were now as speedy as she could have desired. The Queen hastily wrapped herself in a large loose mantle, which covered all inaccuracies of the toilet. In this guise, attended by Edith and her women, and preceded and followed by a few officers and men-at-arms, she hastened to the tent of her lion-like husband.

CHAPTER XVII

Were every hair upon his head a life,
And every life were to be supplicated
By numbers equal to those hairs quadrupled,
Life after life should out like waning stars
Before the daybreak ; or as festive lamps,
Which have lent lustre to the midnight revel,
Each after each are quench'd when guests depart !

Old Play.

THE entrance of Queen Berengaria into the interior of Richard's pavilion was withstood, in the most respectful and reverential manner indeed, but still withstood, by the chamberlains who watched in the outer tent. She could hear the stern command of the King from within, prohibiting their entrance.

'You see,' said the Queen, appealing to Edith, as if she had exhausted all means of intercession in her power — 'I knew it ; the King will not receive us.'

At the same time, they heard Richard speak to some one within — 'Go, speed thine office quickly, sirrah, for in that consists thy mercy ; ten byzants if thou deal'st on him at one blow. And, hark thee, villain, observe if his cheek loses colour or his eye falters ; mark me the smallest twitch of the features or wink of the eyelid ; I love to know how brave souls meet death.'

'If he sees my blade waved aloft without shrinking, he is the first ever did so,' answered a harsh, deep voice, which a sense of unusual awe had softened into a sound much lower than its usual coarse tones.

Edith could remain silent no longer. 'If your Grace,' she said to the Queen, 'make not your own way, I make it for you ; or if not for your Majesty, for myself, at least. Chamberlains, the Queen demands to see King Richard — the wife to speak with her husband.'

'Noble lady,' said the officer, lowering his wand of office, 'it grieves me to gainsay you ; but his Majesty is busied on matters of life and death.'

'And we seek also to speak with him on matters of life and

death,' said Edith. 'I will make entrance for your Grace.' And putting aside the chamberlain with one hand, she laid hold on the curtain with the other.

'I dare not gainsay her Majesty's pleasure,' said the chamberlain, yielding to the vehemence of the fair petitioner; and, as he gave way, the Queen found herself obliged to enter the apartment of Richard.

The monarch was lying on his couch, and at some distance, as awaiting his farther commands, stood a man whose profession it was not difficult to conjecture. He was clothed in a jerkin of red cloth, which reached scantly below the shoulders, leaving the arms bare from about half-way above the elbow, and, as an upper garment, he wore, when about as at present to betake himself to his dreadful office, a coat or tabard without sleeves, something like that of a herald, made of dressed bull's hide, and stained in the front with many a broad spot and speckle of dull crimson. The jerkin, and the tabard over it, reached the knee, and the nether stocks, or covering of the legs, were of the same leather which composed the tabard. A cap of rough shag served to hide the upper part of a visage which, like that of a screech-owl, seemed desirous to conceal itself from light; the lower part of the face being obscured by a huge red beard, mingling with shaggy locks of the same colour. What features were seen were stern and misanthropical. The man's figure was short, strongly made, with a neck like a bull, very broad shoulders, arms of great and disproportioned length, a huge square trunk, and thick bandy legs. This truculent official leant on a sword the blade of which was nearly four feet and a half in length, while the handle of twenty inches, surrounded by a ring of lead plummets to counterpoise the weight of such a blade, rose considerably above the man's head, as he rested his arm upon its hilt, waiting for King Richard's farther directions.

On the sudden entrance of the ladies, Richard, who was then lying on his couch, with his face towards the entrance, and resting on his elbow as he spoke to his grisly attendant, flung himself hastily, as if displeased and surprised, to the other side, turning his back to the Queen and the females of her train, and drawing around him the covering of his couch, which, by his own choice, or more probably the flattering selection of his chamberlains, consisted of two large lions' skins, dressed in Venice with such admirable skill that they seemed softer than the hide of the deer.

Berengaria, such as we have described her, know well — what woman knows not? — her own road to victory. After a hurried glance of undisguised and unaffected terror at the ghastly companion of her husband's secret counsels, she rushed at once to the side of Richard's couch, dropped on her knees, flung her mantle from her shoulder, showing, as they hung down at their full length, her beautiful golden tresses, and while her countenance seemed like the sun bursting through a cloud, yet bearing on its pallid front traces that its splendours have been obscured, she seized upon the right hand of the King, which, as he assumed his wonted posture, had been employed in dragging the covering of his couch, and gradually pulling it to her with a force which was resisted, though but faintly, she possessed herself of that arm, the prop of Christendom and the dread of Heathenesse, and, imprisoning its strength in both her little fairy hands, she bent upon it her brow, and united to it her lips.

'What needs this, Berengaria?' said Richard, his head still averted, but his hand remaining under her control.

'Send away that man — his look kills me!' muttered Berengaria.

'Begone, sirrah,' said Richard, still without looking round, 'what wait'st thou for? art thou fit to look on these ladies?'

'Your Highness's pleasure touching the head,' said the man.

'Out with thee, dog!' answered Richard — 'a Christian burial.'

The man disappeared, after casting a look upon the beautiful Queen, in her deranged dress and natural loveliness, with a smile of admiration more hideous in its expression than even his usual scowl of cynical hatred against humanity.

'And now, foolish wench, what wishest thou?' said Richard, turning slowly and half-reluctantly round to his royal suppliant.

But it was not in nature for any one, far less an admirer of beauty like Richard, to whom it stood only in the second rank to glory, to look without emotion on the countenance and the tremor of a creature so beautiful as Berengaria, or to feel, without sympathy, that her lips, her brow, were on his hand, and that it was wetted by her tears. By degrees, he turned on her his manly countenance, with the softest expression of which his large blue eye, which so often gleamed with insufferable light, was capable. Caressing her fair head, and mingling his large fingers in her beautiful and dishevelled

locks, he raised and tenderly kissed the cherub countenance which seemed desirous to hide itself in his hand. The robust form, the broad, noble brow, and majestic looks, the naked arm and shoulder, the lions' skins among which he lay, and the fair fragile feminine creature that kneeled by his side, might have served for a model of Hercules reconciling himself, after a quarrel, to his wife Dejanire.

'And, once more, what seeks the lady of my heart in her knight's pavilion, at this early and unwonted hour?'

'Pardon, my most gracious liege — pardon!' said the Queen, whose fears began again to unfit her for the duty of intercessor.

'Pardon! for what?' asked the King.

'First, for entering your royal presence too boldly and unadvisedly ——' She stopped.

'*Thou* too boldly! the sun might as well ask pardon because his rays entered the windows of some wretch's dungeon. But I was busied with work unfit for thee to witness, my gentle one, and I was unwilling, besides, that thou shouldst risk thy precious health where sickness has been so lately rife.'

'But thou art now well?' said the Queen, still delaying the communication which she feared to make.

'Well enough to break a lance on the bold crest of that champion who shall refuse to acknowledge thee the fairest dame in Christendom.'

'Thou wilt not then refuse me one boon — only one — only a poor life?'

'Ha! proceed,' said King Richard, bending his brows.

'This unhappy Scottish knight,' murmured the Queen.

'Speak not of him, madam,' exclaimed Richard, sternly; 'he dies — his doom is fixed.'

'Nay, my royal liege and love, 't is but a silken banner neglected; Berengaria will give thee another broidered with her own hand, and rich as ever dallied with the wind. Every pearl I have shall go to bedeck it, and with every pearl I will drop a tear of thankfulness to my generous knight.'

'Thou know'st not what thou say'st,' said the King, interrupting her in anger. 'Pearls! can all the pearls of the East atone for a speck upon England's honour — all the tears that ever woman's eye wept wash away a stain on Richard's fame? Go to, madam, know your place, and your time, and your sphere. At present we have duties in which you cannot be our partner.'

'Thou hear'st, Edith,' whispered the Queen, 'we shall but incense him.'

'Be it so,' said Edith, stepping forward. 'My lord — I, your poor kinswoman, crave you for justice rather than mercy; and to the cry of justice the ears of a monarch should be open at every time, place, and circumstance.'

'Ha! our cousin Edith!' said Richard, rising and sitting upright on the side of his couch, covered with his long camiscia. 'She speaks ever kinglike, and kinglike will I answer her, so she bring no request unworthy herself or me.'

The beauty of Edith was of a more intellectual and less voluptuous cast than that of the Queen; but impatience and [illegible] given her countenance a glow which it sometimes [illegible], and her mien had a character of energetic dignity that [illegible] silence for a moment even on Richard himself, who, to [illegible]e by his looks, would willingly have interrupted her.

'My lord,' she said, 'this good knight, whose blood you are about to spill, hath done, in his time, service to Christendom. He hath fallen from his duty through a snare set for him in mere folly and idleness of spirit. A message sent to him in the name of one who — why should I not speak it? — it was in my own — induced him for an instant to leave his post. And what knight in the Christian camp might not have thus far transgressed at command of a maiden who, poor howsoever in other qualities, hath yet the blood of Plantagenet in her veins?'

'And you saw him, then, cousin?' replied the King, biting his lips to keep down his passion.

'I did, my liege,' said Edith. 'It is no time to explain wherefore: I am here neither to exculpate myself nor to blame others.'

'And where did you do him such a grace?'

'In the tent of her Majesty the Queen.'

'Of our royal consort!' said Richard. 'Now by Heaven, by St. George of England, and every other saint that treads its crystal floor, this is too audacious! I have noticed and overlooked this warrior's insolent admiration of one so far above him, and I grudged him not that one of my blood should shed from her high-born sphere such influence as the sun bestows on the world beneath. But, heaven and earth! that you should have admitted him to an audience by night, in the very tent of our royal consort, and dare to offer this as an excuse for his disobedience and desertion! By my father's soul, Edith, thou shalt rue this thy life long in a monastery!'

'My liege,' said Edith, 'your greatness licenses tyranny. My honour, Lord King, is as little touched as yours, and my Lady the Queen can prove it if she think fit. But I have already said, I am not here to excuse myself or inculpate others. I ask you but to extend to one whose fault was committed under strong temptation that mercy which even you yourself, Lord King, must one day supplicate at a higher tribunal, and for faults, perhaps, less venial.'

'Can this be Edith Plantagenet?' said the King, bitterly — 'Edith Plantagenet, the wise and the noble? Or is it some love-sick woman, who cares not for her own fame in comparison of the life of her paramour? Now, by King Henry's soul! little hinders but I order thy minion's skull to be brought from the gibbet, and fixed as a perpetual ornament by the crucifix in thy cell.'

'And if thou dost send it from the gibbet to be placed for ever in my sight,' said Edith, 'I will say it is a relic of a good knight, cruelly and unworthily done to death by — (she checked herself) — by one of whom I shall only say, he should have known better how to reward chivalry. Minion call'st thou him?' she continued, with increasing vehemence. 'He was indeed my lover, and a most true one; but never sought he grace from me by look or word, contented with such humble observance as men pay to the saints. And the good — the valiant — the faithful must die for this!'

'O, peace — peace, for pity's sake,' whispered the Queen, 'you do but offend him more!'

'I care not,' said Edith: 'the spotless virgin fears not the raging lion. Let him work his will on this worthy knight. Edith, for whom he dies, will know how to weep his memory: to me no one shall speak more of politic alliances, to be sanctioned with this poor hand. I could not — I would not — have been his bride living — our degrees were too distant. But death unites the high and the low: I am henceforward the spouse of the grave.'

The King was about to answer with much anger, when a Carmelite monk entered the apartment hastily, his head and person muffled in the long mantle and hood of striped cloth of the coarsest texture which distinguished his order, and, flinging himself on his knees before the King, conjured him, by every holy word and sign, to stop the execution.

'Now, by both sword and sceptre,' said Richard, 'the world are leagued to drive me mad! Fools, women, and monks cross me at every step. How comes he to live still?'

'My gracious liege,' said the monk, 'I entreated of the Lord of Gilsland to stay the execution until I had thrown myself at your royal ——'

'And he was wilful enough to grant thy request?' said the King; 'but it is of a piece with his wonted obstinacy. And what is it thou hast to say? Speak, in the fiend's name!'

'My lord, there is a weighty secret — but it rests under the seal of confession — I dare not tell or even whisper it; but I swear to thee by my holy order, by the habit which I wear, by the blessed Elias, our founder, even him who was translated without suffering the ordinary pangs of mortality, that this youth hath divulged to me a secret which, if I might confide it to thee, would utterly turn thee from thy bloody purpose in regard to him.'

'Good father,' said Richard, 'that I reverence the church, let the arms which I now wear for her sake bear witness. Give me to know this secret, and I will do what shall seem fitting in the matter. But I am no blind Bayard, to take a leap in the dark under the stroke of a pair of priestly spurs.'

'My lord,' said the holy man, throwing back his cowl and upper vesture, and discovering under the latter a garment of goat-skin, and from beneath the former a visage so wildly wasted by climate, fast, and penance as to resemble rather the apparition of an animated skeleton than a human face, 'for twenty years have I macerated this miserable body in the caverns of Engaddi, doing penance for a great crime. Think you I, who am dead to the world, would contrive a falsehood to endanger my own soul, or that one bound by the most sacred oaths to the contrary — one such as I, who have but one longing wish connected with earth, to wit, the rebuilding of our Christian Zion — would betray the secrets of the confessional? Both are alike abhorrent to my very soul.'

'So,' answered the King, 'thou art that hermit of whom men speak so much? Thou art, I confess, like enough to those spirits which walk in dry places, but Richard fears no hob goblins; and thou art he, too, as I bethink me, to whom the Christian princes sent this very criminal to open a communication with the Soldan, even while I, who ought to have been first consulted, lay on my sick-bed? Thou and they may content themselves, I will not put my neck into the loop of a Carmelite's girdle. And, for your envoy, he shall die, the rather and the sooner that thou dost entreat for him.'

'Now God be gracious to thee, Lord King!' said the hermit,

with much emotion; 'thou art setting that mischief on foot which thou wilt hereafter wish thou hadst stopt, though it had cost thee a limb. Rash, blinded man, yet forbear!'

'Away — away,' cried the King, stamping; 'the sun has risen on the dishonour of England, and it is not yet avenged. Ladies and priest, withdraw, if ye would not hear orders which would displease you; for, by St. George, I swear ——'

'Swear NOT!' said the voice of one who had just then entered the pavilion.

'Ha! my learned Hakim,' said the King; 'come, I hope, to tax our generosity.'

'I come to request instant speech with you — instant — and touching matters of deep interest.'

'First look on my wife, Hakim, and let her know in you the preserver of her husband.'

'It is not for me,' said the physician, folding his arms with an air of Oriental modesty and reverence, and bending his eyes on the ground — 'it is not for me to look upon beauty unveiled, and armed in its splendours.'

'Retire, then, Berengaria,' said the monarch; 'and, Edith, do you retire also. Nay, renew not your importunities! This I give to them, that the execution shall not be till high noon. Go and be pacified. Dearest Berengaria, begone. Edith,' he added, with a glance which struck terror even into the courageous soul of his kinswoman, 'go, if you are wise.'

The females withdrew, or rather hurried from the tent, rank and ceremony forgotten, much like a flock of wild-fowl huddled together, against whom the falcon has made a recent stoop.

They returned from thence to the Queen's pavilion, to indulge in regrets and recriminations, equally unavailing. Edith was the only one who seemed to disdain these ordinary channels of sorrow. Without a sigh, without a tear, without a word of upbraiding, she attended upon the Queen, whose weak temperament showed her sorrow in violent hysterical ecstasies, and passionate hypochondriacal effusions, in the course of which Edith sedulously, and even affectionately, attended her.

'It is impossible she can have loved this knight,' said Florise to Calista, her senior in attendance upon the Queen's person. 'We have been mistaken; she is but sorry for his fate, as for a stranger who has come to trouble on her account.'

'Hush — hush,' answered her more experienced and more observant comrade; 'she is of that proud house of Plantagenet,

who never own that a hurt grieves them. While they have themselves been bleeding to death under a mortal wound, they have been known to bind up the scratches sustained by their more faint-hearted comrades. Florise, we have done frightfully wrong; and, for my own part, I would buy with every jewel I have, that our fatal jest had remained unacted.'

CHAPTER XVIII

This work desires a planetary intelligence
Of Jupiter and Sol; and those great spirits
Are proud, fantastical. It asks great charges
To entice them from the guiding of their spheres,
To wait on mortals.

Albumazar.

THE hermit followed the ladies from the pavilion of Richard, as shadow follows a beam of sunshine when the clouds are driving over the face of the sun. But he turned on the threshold, and held up his hand towards the King in a warning, or almost a menacing, posture, as he said — 'Woe to him who rejects the counsel of the church, and betaketh himself to the foul divan of the infidel! King Richard, I do not yet shake the dust from my feet and depart from thy encampment: the sword falls not, but it hangs but by a hair. Haughty monarch, we shall meet again.'

'Be it so, haughty priest,' returned Richard — 'prouder in thy goat-skins than princes in purple and fine linen.'

The hermit vanished from the tent, and the King continued, addressing the Arabian, 'Do the dervises of the East, wise Hakim, use such familiarity with their princes?'

'The dervise,' replied Adonbec, 'should be either a sage or a madman; there is no middle course for him who wears the *khirkhah*,[1] who watches by night and fasts by day. Hence hath he either wisdom enough to bear himself discreetly in the presence of princes, or else, having no reason bestowed on him, he is not responsible for his own actions.'

'Methinks our monks have adopted chiefly the latter character,' said Richard. 'But to the matter. In what can I pleasure you, my learned physician?'

'Great King,' said El Hakim, making his profound Oriental obeisance, 'let thy servant speak one word, and yet live. I would remind thee that thou owest — not to me, their humble

[1] Literally, the torn robe. The habit of the dervises is so called.

instrument — but to the Intelligences, whose benefits I dispense to mortals, a life ——'

'And I warrant me thou wouldst have another in requital, ha?' interrupted the King.

'Such is my humble prayer,' said the Hakim, 'to the great Melech Ric, even the life of this good knight, who is doomed to die, and but for such fault as was committed by the Sultan Adam, surnamed Aboulbeschar, or the father of all men.'

'And thy wisdom might remind thee, Hakim, that Adam died for it,' said the King, somewhat sternly, and then began to pace the narrow space of his tent, with some emotion, and to talk to himself. 'Why, God-a-mercy, I knew what he desired as soon as ever he entered the pavilion! Here is one poor life justly condemned to extinction, and I, a king and a soldier, who have slain thousands by my command, and scores with my own hand, am to have no power over it, although the honour of my arms, of my house, of my very Queen, hath been attainted by the culprit. By St. George, it makes me laugh! By St. Louis, it reminds me of Blondel's tale of an enchanted castle, where the destined knight was withstood successively in his purpose of entrance by forms and figures the most dissimilar, but all hostile to his undertaking. No sooner one sunk than another appeared. Wife — kinswoman — hermit — Hakim — each appears in the lists as soon as the other is defeated. Why, this is a single knight fighting against the whole mêlée of the tournament — ha! ha! ha!' And Richard laughed aloud; for he had, in fact, begun to change his mood, his resentment being usually too violent to be of long endurance.

The physician meanwhile looked on him with a countenance of surprise, not unmingled with contempt; for the Eastern people make no allowance for those mercurial changes in the temper, and consider open laughter, upon almost any account, as derogatory to the dignity of man, and becoming only to women and children. At length, the sage addressed the King, when he saw him more composed.

'A doom of death should not issue from laughing lips. Let thy servant hope that thou hast granted him this man's life.'

'Take the freedom of a thousand captives instead,' said Richard: 'restore so many of thy countrymen to their tents and families, and I will give the warrant instantly. This man's life can avail thee nothing, and it is forfeited.'

'All our lives are forfeited,' said the Hakim, putting his

hand to his cap. 'But the great Creditor is merciful, and exacts not the pledge rigorously nor untimely.'

'Thou canst show me,' said Richard, 'no special interest thou hast to become intercessor betwixt me and the execution of justice, to which I am sworn as a crowned king.'

'Thou art sworn to the dealing forth mercy as well as justice,' said El Hakim; 'but what thou seekest, great King, is the execution of thine own will. And, for the concern I have in this request, know that many a man's life depends upon thy granting this boon.'

'Explain thy words,' said Richard; 'but think not to impose upon me by false pretexts.'

'Be it far from thy servant!' said Adonbec. 'Know, then, that the medicine to which thou, sir king, and many one beside owe their recovery is a talisman, composed under certain aspects of the heavens, when the Divine Intelligences are most propitious. I am but the poor administrator of its virtues. I dip it in a cup of water, observe the fitting hour to administer it to the patient, and the potency of the draught works the cure.'

'A most rare medicine,' said the King, 'and a commodious! and, as it may be carried in the leech's purse, would save the whole caravan of camels which they require to convey drugs and physic-stuff. I marvel there is any other in use.'

'It is written,' answered the Hakim, with imperturbable gravity, '"Abuse not the steed which hath borne thee from the battle." Know, that such talismans might indeed be framed, but rare has been the number of adepts who have dared to undertake the application of their virtue. Severe restrictions, painful observances, fasts, and penance are necessary on the part of the sage who uses this mode of cure; and if, through neglect of these preparations, by his love of ease, or his indulgence of sensual appetite, he omits to cure at least twelve persons within the course of each moon, the virtue of the divine gift departs from the amulet, and both the last patient and the physician will be exposed to speedy misfortune, neither will they survive the year. I require yet one life to make up the appointed number.'

'Go out into the camp, good Hakim, where thou wilt find a many,' said the King, 'and do not seek to rob my headsman of *his* patients; it is unbecoming a mediciner of thine eminence to interfere with the practice of another. Besides, I cannot see how delivering a criminal from the death he deserves should go to make up thy tale of miraculous cures.'

'When thou canst show why a draught of cold water should have cured thee, when the most precious drugs failed,' said the Hakim, 'thou mayst reason on the other mysteries attendant on this matter. For myself, I am inefficient to the great work, having this morning touched an unclean animal. Ask, therefore, no farther questions; it is enough that, by sparing this man's life at my request, you will deliver yourself, great King, and t ,y servant from a great danger.'

'Hark thee, Adonbec,' replied the King, 'I have no objection that leeches should wrap their words in mist, and pretend to derive knowledge from the stars; but when you bid Richard Plantagenet fear that a danger will fall upon *him* from some idle omen or omitted ceremonial, you speak to no ignorant Saxon, or doting old woman, who foregoes her purpose because a hare crosses the path, a raven croaks, or a cat sneezes.'

'I cannot hinder your doubt of my words,' said Adonbec; 'but yet, let my Lord the King grant that truth is on the tongue of his servant, will he think it just to deprive the world, and every wretch who may suffer by the pains which so lately reduced him to that couch, of the benefit of this most virtuous talisman, rather than extend his forgiveness to one poor criminal? Bethink you, Lord King, that, though thou canst slay thousands, thou canst not restore one man to health. Kings have the power of Satan to torment, sages that of Allah to heal; beware how thou hinderest the good to humanity which thou canst not thyself render. Thou canst cut off the head, but not cure the aching tooth.'

'This is over-insolent,' said the King, hardening himself, as the Hakim assumed a more lofty, and almost a commanding, tone. 'We took thee for our leech, not for our counsellor or conscience-keeper.'

'And is it thus the most renowned prince of Frangistan repays benefit done to his royal person?' said El Hakim, exchanging the humble and stooping posture in which he had hitherto solicited the King for an attitude lofty and commanding. 'Know, then,' he said, 'that through every court of Europe and Asia — to Moslem and Nazarene — to knight and lady — wherever harp is heard and sword worn — wherever honour is loved and infamy detested — to every quarter of the world will I denounce thee, Melech Ric, as thankless and ungenerous; and even the lands — if there be any such — that never heard of thy renown shall yet be acquainted with thy shame!'

'Are these terms to me, vile infidel?' said Richard, striding up to him in fury. 'Art weary of thy life?'

'Strike!' said El Hakim; 'thine own deed shall then paint thee more worthless than could my words, though each had an hornet's sting.'

Richard turned fiercely from him, folded his arms, traversed the tent as before, and then exclaimed, 'Thankless and ungenerous! as well be termed coward and infidel. Hakim, thou hast chosen thy boon; and though I had rather thou hadst asked my crown-jewels, yet I may not, kinglike, refuse thee. Take this Scot, therefore, to thy keeping; the provost will deliver him to thee on this warrant.'

He hastily traced one or two lines, and gave them to the physician. 'Use him as thy bond-slave, to be disposed of as thou wilt; only let him beware how he comes before the eyes of Richard. Hark thee — thou art wise — he hath been overbold among those in whose fair looks and weak judgments we trust our honour, as you of the East lodge your treasures in caskets of silver wire, as fine and as frail as the web of a gossamer.'

'Thy servant understands the words of the King,' said the sage, at once resuming the reverent style of address in which he had commenced. 'When the rich carpet is soiled, the fool pointeth to the stain, the wise man covers it with his mantle. I have heard my lord's pleasure, and to hear is to obey.'

'It is well,' said the King; 'let him consult his own safety, and never appear in my presence more. Is there aught else in which I may do thee pleasure?'

'The bounty of the King hath filled my cup to the brim,' said the sage; 'yea, it hath been abundant as the fountain which sprung up amid the camp of the descendants of Israel, when the rock was stricken by the rod of Moussa ben Amran.'

'Ay, but,' said the King, smiling, 'it required, as in the desert, a hard blow on the rock, ere it yielded its treasures. I would that I knew something to pleasure thee, which I might yield as freely as the natural fountain sends forth its waters.'

'Let me touch that victorious hand,' said the sage, 'in token that, if Adonbec el Hakim should hereafter demand a boon of Richard of England, he may do so, yet plead his command.'

'Thou hast hand and glove upon it, man,' replied Richard; 'only, if thou couldst consistently make up thy tale of patients without craving me to deliver from punishment those who have

deserved it, I would more willingly discharge my debt in some other form.'

'May thy days be multiplied!' answered the Hakim, and withdrew from the apartment after the usual deep obeisance.

King Richard gazed after him as he departed, like one but half-satisfied with what had passed.

'Strange pertinacity,' he said, 'in this Hakim, and a wonderful chance to interfere between that audacious Scot and the chastisement he has merited so richly. Yet, let him live! there is one brave man the more in the world. And now for the Austrian. Ho, is the Baron of Gilsland there without?'

Sir Thomas de Vaux thus summoned, his bulky form speedily darkened the opening of the pavilion, while behind him glided as a spectre, unannounced yet unopposed, the savage form of the hermit of Engaddi, wrapped in his goat-skin mantle.

Richard, without noticing his presence, called in a loud tone to the baron, 'Sir Thomas de Vaux of Lanercost and Gilsland, take trumpet and herald, and go instantly to the tent of him whom they call Archduke of Austria, and see that it be when the press of his knights and vassals is greatest around him, as is likely at this hour, for the German boar breakfasts ere he hears mass; enter his presence with as little reverence as thou mayst, and impeach him, on the part of Richard of England, that he hath this night, by his own hand or that of others, stolen from its staff the banner of England. Wherefore, say to him our pleasure that, within an hour from the time of my speaking, he restore the said banner with all reverence, he himself and his principal barons waiting the whilst with heads uncovered, and without their robes of honour. And that, moreover, he pitch beside it, on the one hand, his own banner of Austria reversed, as that which hath been dishonoured by theft and felony; and on the other a lance, bearing the bloody head of him who was his nearest counsellor or assistant in this base injury. And say, that such our behests being punctually discharged, we will, for the sake of our vow and the weal of the Holy Land, forgive his other forfeits.'

'And how if the Duke of Austria deny all accession to this act of wrong and of felony?' said Thomas de Vaux.

'Tell him,' replied the King, 'we will prove it upon his body — ay, were he backed with his two bravest champions. Knightlike will we prove it, on foot or on horse, in the desert or in the field — time, place, and arms all at his own choice.'

'Bethink you of the peace of God and the church, my liege

lord,' said the Baron of Gilsland, 'among those princes engaged in this holy Crusade.'

'Bethink you how to execute my commands, my liege vassal,' answered Richard, impatiently. 'Methinks men expect to turn our purpose by their breath, as boys blow feathers to and fro. Peace of the church! who, I prithee, minds it? The peace of the church, among Crusaders, implies war with the Saracens, with whom the princes have made truce, and the one ends with the other. And, besides, see you not how every prince of them is seeking his own several ends? I will seek mine also, and that is honour. For honour I came hither, and if I may not win it upon the Saracens, at least I will not lose a jot from any respect to this paltry duke, though he were bulwarked and buttressed by every prince in the Crusade.'

De Vaux turned to obey the King's mandate, shrugging his shoulders at the same time, the bluntness of his nature being unable to conceal that its tenor went against his judgment. But the hermit of Engaddi stepped forward, and assumed the air of one charged with higher commands than those of a mere earthly potentate. Indeed, his dress of shaggy skins, his uncombed and untrimmed hair and beard, his lean, wild, and contorted features, and the almost insane fire which gleamed from under his bushy eyebrows, made him approach nearly to our idea of some seer of Scripture, who, charged with high mission to the sinful kings of Judah or Israel, descended from the rocks and caverns in which he dwelt in abstracted solitude, to abash earthly tyrants in the midst of their pride, by discharging on them the blighting denunciations of Divine Majesty, even as the cloud discharges the lightnings with which it is fraught on the pinnacles and towers of castles and palaces.

In the midst of his most wayward mood, Richard respected the church and its ministers, and though offended at the intrusion of the hermit into his tent, he greeted him with respect; at the same time, however, making a sign to Sir Thomas de Vaux to hasten on his message.

But the hermit prohibited the baron, by gesture, look, and word, to stir a yard on such an errand; and, holding up his bare arm, from which the goat-skin mantle fell back in the violence of his action, he waved it aloft, meagre with famine, and wealed with the blows of the discipline.

'In the name of God, and of the most holy Father, the vicegerent of the Christian Church upon earth, I prohibit this most profane, bloodthirsty, and brutal defiance betwixt two

Christian princes, whose shoulders are signed with the blessed mark under which they swore brotherhood. Woe to him by whom it is broken! Richard of England, recall the most unhallowed message thou hast given to that baron. Danger and death are nigh thee — the dagger is glancing at thy very throat!'

'Danger and death are playmates to Richard,' answered the monarch, proudly; 'and he hath braved too many swords to fear a dagger.'

'Danger and death are near,' replied the seer; and, sinking his voice to a hollow, unearthly tone, he added, 'And after death the judgment!'

'Good and holy father,' said Richard, 'I reverence thy person and thy sanctity ——'

'Reverence not me,' interrupted the hermit; 'reverence sooner the vilest insect that crawls by the shores of the Dead Sea, and feeds upon its accursed slime. But reverence Him whose commands I speak. Reverence Him whose sepulchre you have vowed to rescue. Revere the oath of concord which you have sworn, and break not the silver cord of union and fidelity with which you have bound yourself to your princely confederates.'

'Good father,' said the King, 'you of the church seem to me to presume somewhat, if a layman may say so much, upon the dignity of your holy character. Without challenging your right to take charge of our conscience, methinks you might leave us the charge of our own honour.'

'Presume!' repeated the hermit; 'is it for me to presume, royal Richard, who am but the bell obeying the hand of the sexton — but the senseless and worthless trumpet, carrying the command of him who sounds it? See, on my knees I throw myself before thee, imploring thee to have mercy on Christendom, on England, and on thyself!'

'Rise — rise,' said Richard, compelling him to stand up; 'it beseems not that knees which are so frequently bended to the Deity should press the ground in honour of man. What danger awaits us, reverend father? and when stood the power of England so low, that the noisy bluster of this new-made duke's displeasure should alarm her or her monarch?'

'I have looked forth from my mountain turret upon the starry host of heaven, as each in his midnight circuit uttered wisdom to another, and knowledge to the few who can understand their voice. There sits an enemy in thy house of life,

Lord King, malign at once to thy fame and thy prosperity — an emanation of Saturn, menacing thee with instant and bloody peril, and which, but thou yield thy proud will to the rule of thy duty, will presently crush thee, even in thy pride.'

'Away — away, this is heathen science,' said the King. 'Christians practise it not; wise men believe it not. Old man, th u dotest.'

'I dote not, Richard,' answered the hermit; 'I am not so happy. I know my condition, and that some portion of reason is yet permitted me, not for my own use, but that of the church and the advancement of the Cross. I am the blind man who holds a torch to others, though it yields no light to himself. Ask me touching what concerns the weal of Christendom and of this Crusade, and I will speak with thee as the wisest counsellor on whose tongue persuasion ever sat. Speak to me of my own wretched being, and my words shall be those of the maniac outcast which I am.'

'I would not break the bands of unity asunder among the princes of the Crusade,' said Richard, with a mitigated tone and manner; 'but what atonement can they render me for the injustice and insult which I have sustained?'

'Even of that I am prepared and commissioned to speak by the council, which, meeting hastily at the summons of Philip of France, have taken measures for that effect.'

'Strange,' replied Richard, 'that others should treat of what is due to the wounded Majesty of England!'

'They are willing to anticipate your demands, if it be possible,' answered the hermit. 'In a body, they consent that the banner of England be replaced on St. George's Mount, and they lay under ban and condemnation the audacious criminal, or criminals, by whom it was outraged, and will announce a princely reward to any who shall denounce the delinquent's guilt, and give his flesh to the wolves and ravens.'

'And Austria,' said Richard, 'upon whom rest such strong presumptions that he was the author of the deed?'

'To prevent discord in the host,' replied the hermit, 'Austria will clear himself of the suspicion, by submitting to whatsoever ordeal the Patriarch of Jerusalem shall impose.'

'Will he clear himself by the trial by combat?' said King Richard.

'His oath prohibits it,' said the hermit; 'and, moreover, the council of the princes ——'

'Will neither authorise battle against the Saracens,' inter-

rupted Richard, 'nor against any one else. But it is enough, father; thou hast shown me the folly of proceeding as I designed in this matter. You shall sooner light your torch in a puddle of rain than bring a spark out of a cold-blooded coward. There is no honour to be gained on Austria, and so let him pass. I will have him perjure himself, however: I will insist on the ordeal. How I shall laugh to hear his clumsy fingers hiss, as he grasps the red-hot globe of iron! Ay, or his huge mouth riven, and his gullet swelling to suffocation, as he endeavours to swallow the consecrated bread!'

'Peace, Richard,' said the hermit — 'oh, peace, for shame if not for charity! Who shall praise or honour princes who insult and calumniate each other? Alas! that a creature so noble as thou art, so accomplished in princely thoughts and princely daring, so fitted to honour Christendom by thy actions, and, in thy calmer mood, to rule her by thy wisdom, should yet have the brute and wild fury of the lion mingled with the dignity and courage of that king of the forest!'

He remained an instant musing with his eyes fixed on the ground, and then proceeded — 'But Heaven, that knows our imperfect nature, accepts of our imperfect obedience, and hath delayed, though not averted, the bloody end of thy daring life. The destroying angel hath stood still, as of old by the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite, and the blade is drawn in his hand, by which, at no distant date, Richard the lion-hearted shall be as low as the meanest peasant.'

'Must it then be so soon?' said Richard. 'Yet, even so be it. May my course be bright, if it be but brief!'

'Alas! noble King,' said the solitary, and it seemed as if a tear (unwonted guest) were gathering in his dry and glazened eye, 'short and melancholy, marked with mortification, and calamity, and captivity, is the span that divides thee from the grave which yawns for thee — a grave in which thou shalt be laid without lineage to succeed thee, without the tears of a people, exhausted by thy ceaseless wars, to lament thee, without having extended the knowledge of thy subjects, without having done aught to enlarge their happiness.'

'But not without renown, monk — not without the tears of the lady of my love. These consolations, which thou canst neither know nor estimate, await upon Richard to his grave.'

'*Do* I not know — *can* I not estimate, the value of minstrel's praise and of lady's love?' retorted the hermit, in a tone which for a moment seemed to emulate the enthusiasm of Richard

himself. 'King of England,' he continued, extending his emaciated arm, 'the blood which boils in thy blue veins is not more noble than that which stagnates in mine. Few and cold as the drops are, they still are of the blood of the royal Lusignan — of the heroic and sainted Godfrey. I am — that is, I was when in the world — Alberick Mortemar ——'

'Whose deeds,' said Richard, 'have so often filled Fame's trumpet! Is it so — can it be so? Could such a light as thine fall from the horizon of chivalry, and yet men be uncertain where its embers had alighted?'

'Seek a fallen star,' said the hermit, 'and thou shalt only light on some foul jelly, which, in shooting through the horizon, has assumed for a moment an appearance of splendour. Richard, if I thought that rending the bloody veil from my horrible fate could make thy proud heart stoop to the discipline of the church, I could find in my heart to tell thee a tale which I have hitherto kept gnawing at my vitals in concealment, like the self-devoted youth of Heathenesse. Listen, then, Richard, and may the grief and despair which cannot avail this wretched remnant of what was once a man be powerful as an example to so noble, yet so wild, a being as thou art! Yes, I will — I *will* tear open the long hidden wounds, although in thy very presence they should bleed to death!'

King Richard, upon whom the history of Alberick of Mortemar had made a deep impression in his early years, when minstrels were regaling his father's halls with legends of the Holy Land, listened with respect to the outlines of a tale which, darkly and imperfectly sketched, indicated sufficiently the cause of the partial insanity of this singular and most unhappy being.

'I need not,' he said, 'tell thee that I was noble in birth, high in fortune, strong in arms, wise in counsel. All this I was; but while the noblest ladies in Palestine strove which should wind garlands for my helmet, my love was fixed unalterably and devotedly fixed — on a maiden of low degree. Her father, an ancient soldier of the Cross, saw our passion, and knowing the difference betwixt us, saw no other refuge for his daughter's honour than to place her within the shadow of the cloister. I returned from a distant expedition, loaded with spoils and honour, to find my happiness was destroyed for ever. I, too, sought the cloister, and Satan, who had marked me for his own, breathed into my heart a vapour of spiritual pride, which could only have had its source in his own infernal regions.

I had risen as high in the church as before in the state: I was, forsooth, the wise, the self-sufficient, the impeccable! I was the counsellor of councils — I was the director of prelates — how should I stumble — wherefore should I fear temptation? Alas! I became confessor to a sisterhood, and amongst that sisterhood I found the long-loved — the long-lost. Spare me farther confession! A fallen nun, whose guilt was avenged by self-murder, sleeps soundly in the vaults of Engaddi, while, above her very grave, gibbers, moans, and roars a creature to whom but so much reason is left as may suffice to render him completely sensible to his fate!'

'Unhappy man!' said Richard, 'I wonder no longer at thy misery. How didst thou escape the doom which the canons denounce against thy offence?'

'Ask one who is yet in the gall of worldly bitterness,' said the hermit, 'and he will speak of a life spared for personal respects, and from consideration to high birth. But, Richard, *I* tell thee that Providence hath preserved me, to lift me on high as a light and beacon, whose ashes, when this earthly fuel is burnt out, must yet be flung into Tophet. Withered and shrunk as this poor form is, it is yet animated with two spirits — one active, shrewd and piercing, to advocate the cause of the Church of Jerusalem; one mean, abject, and despairing, fluctuating between madness and misery, to mourn over my own wretchedness, and to guard holy relics, on which it would be most sinful for me even to cast my eye. Pity me not! it is but sin to pity the loss of such an abject — pity me not, but profit by my example. Thou standest on the highest, and, therefore, on the most dangerous, pinnacle occupied by any Christian prince. Thou art proud of heart, loose of life, bloody of hand. Put from thee the sins which are to thee as daughters: though they be dear to the sinful Adam, expel these adopted furies from thy breast — thy pride, thy luxury, thy blood-thirstiness!'

'He raves,' said Richard, turning from the solitary to De Vaux, as one who felt some pain from a sarcasm which yet he could not resent; then turned him calmly, and somewhat scornfully, to the anchorite, as he replied — 'Thou hast found a fair bevy of daughters, reverend father, to one who hath been but few months married; but since I must put them from my roof, it were but like a father to provide them with suitable matches. Wherefore I will part with my pride to the noble canons of the church, my luxury, as thou call'st it, to the

monks of the rule, and my blood-thirstiness to the Knights of the Temple.'

'O, heart of steel and hand of iron,' said the anchorite, 'upon whom example, as well as advice, is alike thrown away! Yet shalt thou be spared for a season, in case it so be thou shouldst turn and do that which is acceptable in the sight of Heaven. For me, I must return to my place. *Kyrie eleison!* I am he through whom the rays of Heavenly grace dart like those of the sun through a burning glass, concentrating them on other objects until they kindle and blaze, while the glass itself remains cold and uninfluenced. *Kyrie eleison!* The poor must be called, for the rich have refused the banquet. *Kyrie eleison!*' So saying, he burst from the tent, uttering loud cries.

'A mad priest!' said Richard, from whose mind the frantic exclamations of the hermit had partly obliterated the impression produced by the detail of his personal history and misfortunes. 'After him, De Vaux, and see he comes to no harm; for, Crusaders as we are, a juggler hath more reverence amongst our varlets than a priest or a saint, and they may, perchance, put some scorn upon him.'

The knight obeyed, and Richard presently gave way to the thoughts which the wild prophecy of the monk had inspired. 'To die early — without lineage — without lamentation! a heavy sentence, and well that it is not passed by a more competent judge. Yet the Saracens, who are accomplished in mystical knowledge, will often maintain that He in whose eyes the wisdom of the sage is but as folly inspires wisdom and prophecy into the seeming folly of the madman. Yonder hermit is said to read the stars too, an art generally practised in these lands, where the heavenly host was of yore the object of idolatry. I would I had asked him touching the loss of my banner; for not the blessed Tishbite, the founder of his order, could seem more wildly rapt out of himself, or speak with a tongue more resembling that of a prophet. How now, De Vaux, what news of the mad priest?'

'Mad priest, call you him, my lord?' answered De Vaux. 'Methinks he resembles more the blessed Baptist himself, just issued from the wilderness. He has placed himself on one of the military engines, and from thence he preaches to the soldiers, as never man preached since the time of Peter the Hermit. The camp, alarmed by his cries, crowd around him in thousands; and breaking off every now and then from the main thread of his discourse, he addresses the several nations, each in their

own language, and presses upon each the arguments best qualified to urge them to perseverance in the delivery of Palestine.'

'By this light, a noble hermit!' said King Richard. 'But what else could come from the blood of Godfrey? *He* despair of safety, because he hath in former days lived *par amours?* I will have the Pope send him an ample remission, and I would not less willingly be intercessor had his *belle amie* been an abbess.'

As he spoke, the Archbishop of Tyre craved audience, for the purpose of requesting Richard's attendance, should his health permit, on a secret conclave of the chiefs of the Crusade, and to explain to him the military and political incidents which had occurred during his illness.

CHAPTER XIX

Must we then sheathe our still victorious sword,
Turn back our forward step, which ever trode
O'er foemen's necks the onward path of glory,
Unclasp the mail, which with a solemn vow,
In God's own house, we hung upon our shoulders —
That vow, as unaccomplish'd as the promise
Which village nurses make to still their children,
And after think no more of ?

The Crusade, A Tragedy.

THE Archbishop of Tyre was an emissary well chosen to communicate to Richard tidings which from another voice the lion-hearted king would not have brooked to hear, without the most unbounded explosions of resentment. Even this sagacious and reverend prelate found difficulty in inducing him to listen to news which destroyed all his hopes of gaining back the Holy Sepulchre by force of arms, and acquiring the renown which the universal all-hail of Christendom was ready to confer upon him, as the Champion of the Cross.

But, by the archbishop's report, it appeared that Saladin was assembling all the force of his hundred tribes, and that the monarchs of Europe, already disgusted from various motives with the expedition, which had proved so hazardous, and was daily growing more so, had resolved to abandon their purpose. In this they were countenanced by the example of Philip of France, who, with many protestations of regard, and assurances that he would first see his brother of England in safety, declared his intention to return to Europe. His great vassal, the Earl of Champagne, had adopted the same resolution; and it could not excite surprise that Leopold of Austria, affronted as he had been by Richard, was glad to embrace an opportunity of deserting a cause in which his haughty opponent was to be considered as chief. Others announced the same purpose; so that it was plain that the King of England was to be left, if he chose to remain, supported only by such volunteers as might, under

such depressing circumstances, join themselves to the English army, and by the doubtful aid of Conrade of Montserrat, and the military orders of the Temple and of St. John, who, though they were sworn to wage battle against the Saracens, were at least equally jealous of any European monarch achieving the conquest of Palestine, where, with short-sighted and selfish policy, they proposed to establish independent dominions of their own.

It needed not many arguments to show Richard the truth of his situation; and, indeed, after his first burst of passion, he sat him calmly down, and, with gloomy looks, head depressed, and arms folded on his bosom, listened to the archbishop's reasoning on the impossibility of his carrying on the Crusade when deserted by his companions. Nay, he forbore interruption, even when the prelate ventured, in measured terms, to hint that Richard's own impetuosity had been one main cause of disgusting the princes with the expedition.

'*Confiteor*,' answered Richard, with a dejected look, and something of a melancholy smile; 'I confess, reverend father, that I ought on some accounts to sing *culpa mea*. But is it not hard that my frailties of temper should be visited with such a penance — that, for a burst or two of natural passion, I should be doomed to see fade before me ungathered such a rich harvest of glory to God and honour to chivalry? But it shall *not* fade. By the soul of the Conqueror, I will plant the cross on the towers of Jerusalem, or it shall be planted over Richard's grave!'

'Thou mayst do it,' said the prelate, 'yet not another drop of Christian blood be shed in the quarrel.'

'Ah, you speak of compromise, Lord Prelate; but the blood of the infidel hounds must also cease to flow,' said Richard.

'There will be glory enough,' replied the archbishop, 'in having extorted from Saladin, by force of arms, and by the respect inspired by your fame, such conditions as at once restore the Holy Sepulchre, open the Holy Land to pilgrims, secure their safety by strong fortresses, and, stronger than all, assure the safety of the Holy City, by conferring on Richard the title of King Guardian of Jerusalem.'

'How!' said Richard, his eyes sparkling with unusual light. 'I — I — I the King Guardian of the Holy City! Victory itself, but that it *is* victory, could not gain more, scarce so much, when won with unwilling and disunited forces. But Saladin still proposes to retain his interest in the Holy Land?'

'As a joint sovereign, the sworn ally,' replied the prelate, 'of the mighty Richard — his relative, if it may be permitted, by marriage.'

'By marriage!' said Richard, surprised, yet less so than the prelate had expected. 'Ha! Ay — Edith Plantagenet! Did I dream this or did some one tell me? My head is still weak from this fever, and has been agitated. Was it the Scot, or the Hakim, or yonder holy hermit that hinted such a wild bargain?'

'The hermit of Engaddi, most likely,' said the archbishop, 'for he hath toiled much in this matter; and since the discontent of the princes has become apparent, and a separation of their forces unavoidable, he hath had many consultations, both with Christian and Pagan, for arranging such a pacification as may give to Christendom, at least in part, the objects of this holy warfare.'

'My kinswoman to an infidel — ha!' exclaimed Richard, as his eyes began to sparkle.

The prelate hastened to avert his wrath. 'The Pope's consent must doubtless be first attained, and the holy hermit, who is well known at Rome, will treat with the holy Father.'

'How! without our consent first given?' said the King.

'Surely no,' said the bishop, in a quieting and insinuating tone of voice; 'only with and under your especial sanction.'

'My sanction to marry my kinswoman to an infidel!' said Richard; yet he spoke rather in a tone of doubt than as distinctly reprobating the measure proposed. 'Could I have dreamed of such a composition when I leaped upon the Syrian shore from the prow of my galley, even as a lion springs on his prey; and now ——? But proceed, I will hear with patience.'

Equally delighted and surprised to find his task so much easier than he had apprehended, the archbishop hastened to pour forth before Richard the instances of such alliances in Spain, not without countenance from the Holy See, the incalculable advantages which all Christendom would derive from the union of Richard and Saladin by a bond so sacred; and, above all, he spoke with great vehemence and unction on the probability that Saladin would, in case of the proposed alliance, exchange his false faith for the true one.

Hath the Soldan shown any disposition to become Christian?' said Richard; 'if so, the king lives not on earth to whom I would grant the hand of a kinswoman — ay, or sister — sooner than to my noble Saladin — ay, though the one came to lay

crown and sceptre at her feet, and the other had nothing to offer but his good sword and better heart.'

'Saladin hath heard our Christian teachers,' said the bishop, somewhat evasively — 'my unworthy self, and others, and as he listens with patience, and replies with calmness, it can hardly be but that he be snatched as a brand from the burning. *Magna est veritas, et prevalebit.* Moreover, the hermit of Engaddi, few of whose words have fallen fruitless to the ground, is possessed fully with the belief that there is a calling of the Saracens and the other heathen approaching, to which this marriage shall be matter of induction. He readeth the course of the stars; and dwelling, with maceration of the flesh, in those divine places which the saints have trodden of old, the spirit of Elijah the Tishbite, the founder of his blessed order, hath been with him as it was with the prophet Elisha, the son of Shaphat, when he spread his mantle over him.'

King Richard listened to the prelate's reasoning with a downcast brow and a troubled look.

'I cannot tell,' he said, 'how it is with me; but methinks these cold counsels of the princes of Christendom have infected me too with a lethargy of spirit. The time hath been that, had a layman proposed such alliance to me, I had struck him to earth; if a churchman, I had spit at him as a renegade and priest of Baal; yet now this counsel sounds not so strange in mine ear. For why should I not seek for brotherhood and alliance with a Saracen, brave, just, generous, who loves and honours a worthy foe as if he were a friend; whilst the princes of Christendom shrink from the side of their allies, and forsake the cause of Heaven and good knighthood? But I will possess my patience, and will not think of them. Only one attempt will I make to keep this gallant brotherhood together, if it be possible; and if I fail, Lord Archbishop, we will speak together of thy counsel, which, as now, I neither accept nor altogether reject. Wend we to the council, my lord — the hour calls us. Thou say'st Richard is hasty and proud; thou shalt see him humble himself like the lowly broom-plant from which he derives his surname.'

With the assistance of those of his privy-chamber, the King then hastily robed himself in a doublet and mantle of a dark and uniform colour; and without any mark of regal dignity, excepting a ring of gold upon his head, he hastened with the Archbishop of Tyre to attend the council, which waited but his presence to commence its sitting.

The pavilion of the council was an ample tent, having before it the large banner of the Cross displayed, and another, on which was portrayed a female kneeling, with dishevelled hair and disordered dress, meant to represent the desolate and distressed Church of Jerusalem, and bearing the motto, *Afflictæ sponsæ ne obliviscaris.* Warders, carefully selected, kept every one at a distance from the neighbourhood of this tent, lest the debates, which were sometimes of a loud and stormy character, should reach other ears than those they were designed for.

Here, therefore, the princes of the Crusade were assembled, awaiting Richard's arrival; and even the brief delay which was thus interposed was turned to his disadvantage by his enemies; various instances being circulated of his pride and undue assumption of superiority, of which even the necessity of the present short pause was quoted as an instance. Men strove to fortify each other in their evil opinion of the King of England, and vindicated the offence which each had taken, by putting the most severe construction upon circumstances the most trifling; and all this, perhaps, because they were conscious of an instinctive reverence for the heroic monarch, which it would require more than ordinary efforts to overcome.

They had settled, accordingly, that they should receive him on his entrance with slight notice, and no more respect than was exactly necessary to keep within the bounds of cold ceremonial. But when they beheld that noble form, that princely countenance, somewhat pale from his late illness, the eye which had been called by minstrels the bright star of battle and victory — when his feats almost surpassing human strength and valour, rushed on their recollection, the council of princes simultaneously arose — even the jealous King of France, and the sullen and offended Duke of Austria, arose with one consent, and the assembled princes burst forth with one voice in the acclamation, 'God save King Richard of England! Long life to the valiant Lion's-heart!'

With a countenance frank and open as the summer sun when it rises, Richard distributed his thanks around, and congratulated himself on being once more among his royal brethren of the Crusades.

'Some brief words he desired to say,' such was his address to the assembly, 'though on a subject so unworthy as himself, even at the risk of delaying for a few minutes their consultations for the weal of Christendom and the advancement of their holy enterprise.'

The assembled princes resumed their seats, and there was a profound silence.

'This day,' continued the King of England, 'is a high festival of the church; and well becomes it Christian men, at such a tide, to reconcile themselves with their brethren, and confess their faults to each other. Noble princes, and fathers of this holy expedition, Richard is a soldier: his hand is ever readier than his tongue, and his tongue is but too much used to the rough language of his trade. But do not, for Plantagenet's hasty speeches and ill-considered actions, forsake the noble cause of the redemption of Palestine: do not throw away earthly renown and eternal salvation, to be won here if ever they can be won by man, because the act of a soldier may have been hasty, and his speech as hard as the iron which he has worn from childhood. Is Richard in default to any of you, Richard will make compensation both by word and action. Noble brother of France, have I been so unlucky as to offend you?'

'The Majesty of France has no atonement to seek from that of England,' answered Philip, with kingly dignity, accepting, at the same time, the offered hand of Richard; 'and whatever opinion I may adopt concerning the prosecution of this enterprise will depend on reasons arising out of the state of my own kingdom, certainly on no jealousy or disgust at my royal and most valorous brother.'

'Austria,' said Richard, walking up to the Archduke with a mixture of frankness and dignity, while Leopold arose from his seat, as if involuntarily, and with the action of an automaton, whose motions depended upon some external impulse — 'Austria thinks he hath reason to be offended with England; England, that he hath cause to complain of Austria. Let them exchange forgiveness, that the peace of Europe, and the concord of this host, may remain unbroken. We are now joint-supporters of a more glorious banner than ever blazed before an earthly prince, even the Banner of Salvation; let not, therefore, strife be betwixt us for the symbol of our more worldly dignities; but let Leopold restore the pennon of England, if he has it in his power, and Richard will say, though from no motive save his love for Holy Church, that he repents him of the hasty mood in which he did insult the standard of Austria.'

The Archduke stood still, sullen and discontented, with his eyes fixed on the floor, and his countenance lowering with smothered displeasure, which awe, mingled with awkwardness, prevented his giving vent to in words.

The Patriarch of Jerusalem hastened to break the embarrassing silence, and to bear witness for the Archduke of Austria, that he had exculpated himself, by a solemn oath, from all knowledge, direct or indirect, of the aggression done to the banner of England.

'Then we have done the noble Archduke the greater wrong,' said Richard; 'and craving his pardon for imputing to him an outrage so cowardly, we extend our hand to him in token of renewed peace and amity. But how is this? Austria refuses our uncovered hand, as he formerly refused our mailed glove? What! are we neither to be his mate in peace nor his antagonist in war? Well, let it be so. We will take the slight esteem in which he holds us as a penance for aught which we may have done against him in heat of blood, and will therefore hold the account between us cleared.'

So saying, he turned from the Archduke with an air rather of dignity than scorn, leaving the Austrian apparently as much relieved by the removal of his eye as is a sullen and truant schoolboy when the glance of his severe pedagogue is withdrawn.

'Noble Earl of Champagne — princely Marquis of Montserrat — valiant Grand Master of the Templars, I am here a penitent in the confessional. Do any of you bring a charge, or claim amends from me?'

'I know not on what we could ground any,' said the smooth-tongued Conrade, 'unless it were that the King of England carries off from his poor brothers of the war all the fame which they might have hoped to gain in the expedition.'

'My charge, if I am called on to make one,' said the Master of the Templars, 'is graver and deeper than that of the Marquis of Montserrat. It may be thought ill to beseem a military monk such as I to raise his voice where so many noble princes remain silent; but it concerns our whole host, and not least this noble King of England, that he should hear from some one to his face those charges which there are enow to bring against him in his absence. We laud and honour the courage and high achievements of the King of England, but we feel aggrieved that he should, on all occasions, seize and maintain a precedence and superiority over us which it becomes not independent princes to submit to. Much we might yield of our free will to his bravery, his zeal, his wealth, and his power; but he who snatches all, as matter of right, and leaves nothing to grant out of courtesy and favour, degrades us from allies

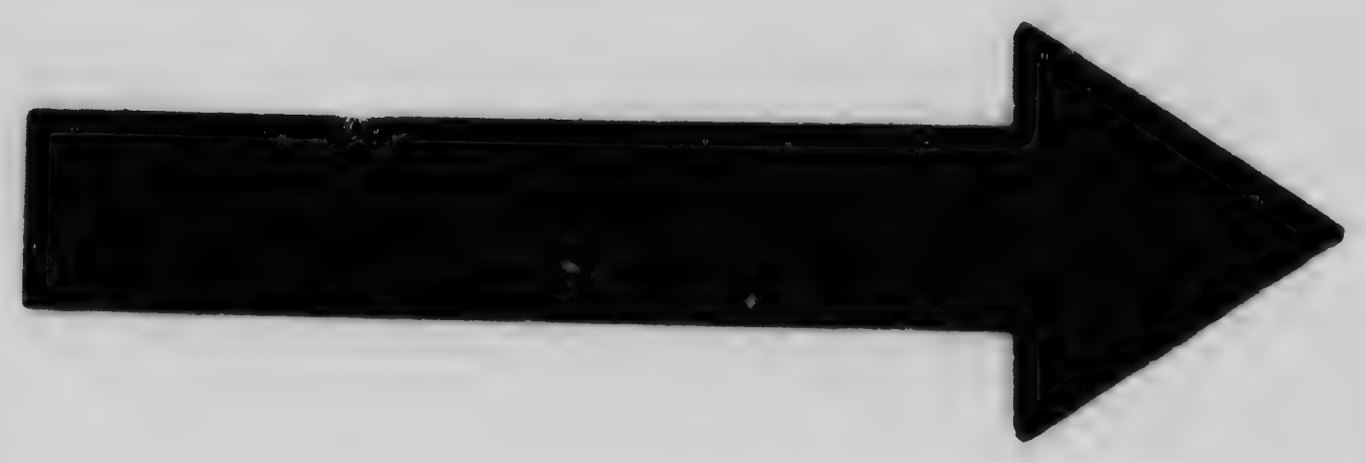
into retainers and vassals, and sullies, in the eyes of our soldiers and subjects, the lustre of our authority, which is no longer independently exercised. Since the royal Richard has asked the truth from us, he must neither be surprised nor angry when he hears one to whom worldly pomp is prohibited, and secular authority is nothing, saving so far as it advances the prosperity of God's temple, and the prostration of the lion which goeth about seeking whom he may devour — when he hears, I say, such a one as I tell him the truth in reply to his question, which truth, even while I speak it, is, I know, confirmed by the heart of every one who hears me, however respect may stifle their voice.

Richard coloured very highly while the Grand Master was making this direct and unvarnished attack upon his conduct, and the murmur of assent which followed it showed plainly that almost all who were present acquiesced in the justice of the accusation. Incensed, and at the same time mortified, he yet foresaw that to give way to his headlong resentment would be to give the cold and wary accuser the advantage over him which it was the Templar's principal object to obtain. He, therefore, with a strong effort, remained silent till he had repeated a paternoster, being the course which his confessor had enjoined him to pursue, when anger was likely to obtain dominion over him. The King then spoke with composure, though not without an embittered tone, especially at the outset.

'And is it even so? And are our brethren at such pains to note the infirmities of our natural temper, and the rough precipitance of our zeal, which may sometimes have urged us to issue commands when there was little time to hold counsel? I could not have thought that offences casual and unpremeditated like mine could find such deep root in the hearts of my allies in this most holy cause, that for my sake they should withdraw their hand from the plough when the furrow was near the end, for my sake turn aside from the direct path to Jerusalem which their swords have opened. I vainly thought that my small services might have outweighed my rash errors; that, if it were remembered that I pressed to the van in an assault, it would not be forgotten that I was ever the last in the retreat; that, if I elevated my banner upon conquered fields of battle, it was all the advantage that I sought, while others were dividing the spoil. I may have called the conquered city by my name, but it was to others that I yielded

the dominion. If I have been headstrong in urging bold counsels, I have not, methinks, spared my own blood or my people's in carrying them into as bold execution; or if I have, in the hurry of march or battle, assumed a command over the soldiers of others, such have been ever treated as my own, when my wealth purchased the provisions and medicines which their own sovereigns could not procure. But it shames me to remind you of what all but myself seem to have forgotten. Let us rather look forward to our future measures; and believe me, brethren,' he continued, his face kindling with eagerness, 'you shall not find the pride, or the wrath, or the ambition of Richard a stumbling-block of offence in the path to which religion and glory summon you, as with the trumpet of an archangel. Oh no — no! never would I survive the thought that my frailties and infirmities had been the means to sever this goodly fellowship of assembled princes. I would cut off my left hand with my right could my doing so attest my sincerity. I will yield up, voluntarily, all right to command in the host, even mine own liege subjects. They shall be led by such sovereigns as you may nominate, and their king, ever but too apt to exchange the leader's baton for the adventurer's lance, will serve under the banner of Beau-Seant among the Templars — ay, or under that of Austria, if Austria will name a brave man to lead his forces. Or, if ye are yourselves a-weary of this war, and feel your armour chafe your tender bodies, leave but with Richard some ten or fifteen thousand of your soldiers to work out the accomplishment of your vow; and when Zion is won,' he exclaimed, waving his hand aloft, as if displaying the standard of the Cross over Jerusalem — 'when Zion is won, we will write upon her gates, NOT the name of Richard Plantagenet, but of those generous princes who entrusted him with the means of conquest.'

The rough eloquence and determined expression of the military monarch at once roused the drooping spirits of the Crusaders, reanimated their devotion, and, fixing their attention on the principal object of the expedition, made most of them who were present blush for having been moved by such petty subjects of complaint as had before engrossed them. Eye caught fire from eye, voice lent courage to voice. They resumed, as with one accord, the war-cry with which the sermon of Peter the Hermit was echoed back, and shouted aloud, 'Lead us on, gallant Lion's-heart, none so worthy to lead where brave men follow. Lead us on — to Jerusalem — to Jerusalem!



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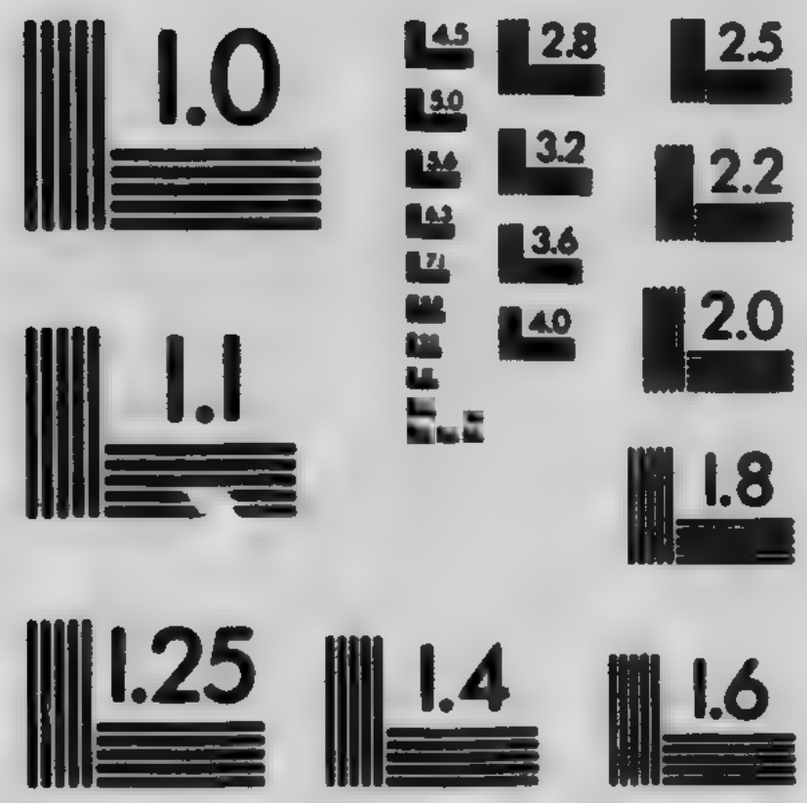

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It is the will of God — it is the will of God! Blessed is he who shall lend an arm to its fulfilment!'

The shout, so suddenly and generally raised, was heard beyond the ring of sentinels who guarded the pavilion of council, and spread among the soldiers of the host, who, inactive and dispirited by disease and climate, had begun, like their leaders, to droop in resolution; but the reappearance of Richard in renewed vigour, and the well-known shout which echoed from the assembly of the princes, at once rekindled their enthusiasm, and thousands and tens of thousands answered with the same shout of 'Zion — Zion! War — war! — instant battle with the infidels! It is the will of God — it is the will of God!'

The acclamations from without increased in their turn the enthusiasm which prevailed within the pavilion. Those who did not actually catch the flame were afraid, at least for the time, to seem colder than others. There was no more speech except of a proud advance towards Jerusalem upon the expiry of the truce, and the measures to be taken in the meantime for supplying and recruiting the army. The council broke up, all apparently filled with the same enthusiastic purpose, which, however, soon faded in the bosom of most, and never had an existence in that of others.

Of the latter class were the Marquis Conrade and the Grand Master of the Templars, who retired together to their quarters ill at ease, and malcontent with the events of the day.

'I ever told it to thee,' said the latter, with the cold, sardonic expression peculiar to him, 'that Richard would burst through the flimsy wiles you spread for him, as would a lion through a spider's web. Thou seest he has but to speak, and his breath agitates these fickle fools as easily as the whirlwind catcheth scattered straws and sweeps them together or disperses them at its pleasure.'

'When the blast has passed away,' said Conrade, 'the straws, which it made dance to its pipe, will settle to earth again.'

'But know'st thou not besides,' said the Templar, 'that it seems, if this new purpose of conquest shall be abandoned and pass away, and each mighty prince shall again be left to such guidance as his own scanty brain can supply, Richard may yet probably become King of Jerusalem by compact, and establish those terms of treaty with the Soldan which thou thyself thought'st him so likely to spurn at?'

'Now, by Mahound and Termagaunt, for Christian oaths are out of fashion,' said Conrade, 'say'st thou the proud King of England would unite his blood with a heathen Soldan? My policy threw in that ingredient to make the whole treaty an abomination to him. As bad for us that he become our master by an agreement as by victory.'

'Thy policy hath ill calculated Richard's digestion,' answered the Templar; 'I know his mind by a whisper from the archbishop. And then thy master-stroke respecting yonder banner — it has passed off with no more respect than two cubits of embroidered silk merited. Marquis Conrade, thy wit begins to halt; I will trust thy fine-spun measures no longer, but will try my own. Know'st thou not the people whom the Saracens call Charegites?'

'Surely,' answered the Marquis; 'they are desperate and besotted enthusiasts, who devote their lives to the advancement of religion; somewhat like Templars, only they are never known to pause in the race of their calling.'

'Jest not,' answered the scowling monk; 'know, that one of these men has set down in his bloody vow the name of the island emperor yonder, to be hewn down as the chief enemy of the Moslem faith.'

'A most judicious paynim,' said Conrade. 'May Mahomet send him his paradise for a reward!'

'He was taken in the camp by one of our squires, and, in private examination, frankly avowed his fixed and determined purpose to me,' said the Grand Master.

'Now the Heavens pardon them who prevented the purpose of this most judicious Charegite!' answered Conrade.

'He is my prisoner,' added the Templar, 'and secluded from speech with others, as thou mayst suppose; but prisons have been broken ——'

'Chains left unlocked, and captives have escaped,' answered the Marquis. 'It is an ancient saying, "No sure dungeon but the grave."'

'When loose he resumes his quest,' continued the military priest, 'for it is the nature of this sort of bloodhound never to quit the slot of the prey he has once scented.'

'Say no more of it,' said the Marquis; 'I see thy policy — it is dreadful, but the emergency is imminent.'

'I only told thee of it,' said the Templar, 'that thou mayst keep thyself on thy guard, for the uproar will be dreadful, and there is no knowing on whom the English may vent their

rage. Ay, and there is another risk: my page knows the counsels of this Charegite,' he continued; 'and, moreover, he is a peevish, self-willed fool, whom I would I were rid of, as he thwarts me by presuming to see with his own eyes, not mine. But our holy Order gives me power to put a remedy to such inconvenience. Or stay — the Saracen may find a good dagger in his cell, and I warrant you he uses it as he breaks forth, which will be of a surety so soon as the page enters with his food.'

'It will give the affair a colour,' said Conrade; 'and yet ——'

'"Yet" and "but,"' said the Templar, 'are words for fools: wise men neither hesitate nor retract: they resolve and they execute.'

CHAPTER XX

When beauty leads the lion in her toils,
Such are her charms, he dare not raise his mane,
Far less expand the terror of his fangs.
So great Alcides made his club a distaff,
And spun to please fair Omphalé.

Anonymous.

RICHARD, the unsuspicious object of the dark treachery detailed in the closing part of the last chapter, having effected, for the present at least, the triumphant union of the Crusading princes in a resolution to prosecute the war with vigour, had it next at heart to establish tranquillity in his own family; and, now that he could judge more temperately, to inquire distinctly into the circumstances leading to the loss of his banner, and the nature and the extent of the connexion betwixt his kinswoman Edith and the banished adventurer from Scotland.

Accordingly, the Queen and her household were startled with a visit from Sir Thomas de Vaux, requesting the present attendance of the Lady Calista of Montfaucon, the Queen's principal bower-woman, upon King Richard.

'What am I to say, madam?' said the trembling attendant to the Queen. 'He will slay us all.'

'Nay, fear not, madam,' said De Vaux. 'His Majesty hath spared the life of the Scottish knight, who was the chief offender, and bestowed him upon the Moorish physician: he will not be severe upon a lady, though faulty.'

'Devise some cunning tale, wench,' said Berengaria. 'My husband hath too little time to make inquiry into the truth.'

'Tell the tale as it really happened,' said Edith, 'lest I tell it for thee.'

'With humble permission of her Majesty,' said De Vaux, 'I would say Lady Edith adviseth well: for although King Richard is pleased to believe what it pleases your Grace to tell him, yet I doubt his having the same deference for the Lady Calista, and in this especial matter.'

'The Lord of Gilsland is right,' said the Lady Calista, much agitated at the thoughts of the investigation which was to take place; 'and, besides, if I had presence of mind enough to forge a plausible story, beshrew me if I think I should have the courage to tell it.'

In this candid humour, the Lady Calista was conducted by De Vaux to the King, and made, as she had proposed, a full confession of the decoy by which the unfortunate Knight of the Leopard had been induced to desert his post; exculpating the Lady Edith, who, she was aware, would not fail to exculpate herself, and laying the full burden on the Queen, her mistress, whose share of the frolic, she well knew, would appear the most venial in the eyes of Cœur-de-Lion. In truth, Richard was a fond, almost an uxorious, husband. The first burst of his wrath had long since passed away, and he was not disposed severely to censure what could not now be amended. The wily Lady Calista, accustomed from her earliest childhood to fathom the intrigues of a court and watch the indications of a sovereign's will, hastened back to the Queen with the speed of a lapwing, charged with the King's commands that she should expect a speedy visit from him; to which the bower-lady added a commentary founded on her own observation, tending to show that Richard meant just to preserve so much severity as might bring his royal consort to repent of her frolic, and then to extend to her and all concerned his gracious pardon.

'Sits the wind in that corner, wench?' said the Queen, much relieved by this intelligence. 'Believe me that, great commander as he is, Richard will find it hard to circumvent us in this matter; and that, as the Pyrenean shepherds are wont to say in my native Navarre, many a one comes for wool and goes back shorn.'

Having possessed herself of all the information which Calista could communicate, the royal Berengaria arrayed herself in her most becoming dress, and awaited with confidence the arrival of the heroic Richard.

He arrived, and found himself in the situation of a prince entering an offending province in the confidence that his business will only be to inflict rebuke and receive submission, when he unexpectedly finds it in a state of complete defiance and insurrection. Berengaria well knew the power of her charms and the extent of Richard's affection, and felt assured that she could make her own terms good, now that the first tremendous explosion of his anger had expended itself without

mischief. Far from listening to the King's intended rebuke, as what the levity of her conduct had justly deserved, she extenuated, nay defended, as a harmless frolic, that which she was accused of. She denied, indeed, with many a pretty form of negation, that she had directed Nectabanus absolutely to entice the knight farther than the brink of the mount on which he kept watch — and indeed this was so far true, that she had not designed Sir Kenneth to be introduced into her tent; and then, eloquent in urging her own defence, the Queen was far more so in pressing upon Richard the charge of unkindness, in refusing her so poor a boon as the life of an unfortunate knight, who, by her thoughtless prank, had been brought within the danger of martial law. She wept and sobbed while she enlarged on her husband's obduracy on this score, as a rigour which had threatened to make her unhappy for life, whenever she should reflect that she had given, unthinkingly, the remote cause for such a tragedy. The vision of the slaughtered victim would have haunted her dreams — nay, for aught she knew, since such things often happened, his actual spectre might have stood by her waking couch. To all this misery of the mind was she exposed by the severity of one who, while he pretended to dote upon her slightest glance, would not forego one act of poor revenge, though the issue was to render her miserable.

All this flow of female eloquence was accompanied with the usual arguments of tears and sighs, and uttered with such tone and action as seemed to show that the Queen's resentment arose neither from pride nor sullenness, but from feelings hurt at finding her consequence with her husband less than she had expected to possess.

The good King Richard was considerably embarrassed. He tried in vain to reason with one whose very jealousy of his affection rendered her incapable of listening to argument, nor could he bring himself to use the restraint of lawful authority to a creature so beautiful in the midst of her unreasonable displeasure. He was, therefore, reduced to the defensive, endeavoured gently to chide her suspicions and soothe her displeasure, and recalled to her mind that she need not look back upon the past with recollections either of remorse or supernatural fear, since Sir Kenneth was alive and well, and had been bestowed by him upon the great Arabian physician, who, doubtless, of all men, knew best how to keep him living. But this seemed the unkindest cut of all, and the Queen's sorrow

was renewed at the idea of a Saracen — a mediciner — obtaining a boon for which, with bare head and on bended knee, she had petitioned her husband in vain. At this new charge, Richard's patience began rather to give way, and he said, in a serious tone of voice, 'Berengaria, the physician saved my life. If it is of value in your eyes, you will not grudge him a higher recompense than the only one I could prevail on him to accept.'

The Queen was satisfied she had urged her coquettish displeasure to the verge of safety.

'My Richard,' she said, 'why brought you not that sage to me, that England's Queen might show how she esteemed him who could save from extinction the lamp of chivalry, the glory of England, and the light of poor Berengaria's life and hope?'

In a word, the matrimonial dispute was ended; but, that some penalty might be paid to justice, both King and Queen accorded in laying the whole blame on the agent Nectabanus, who (the Queen being by this time well weary of the poor dwarf's humour) was, with his royal consort Guenevra, sentenced to be banished from the court; and the unlucky dwarf only escaped a supplementary whipping, from the Queen's assurances that he had already sustained personal chastisement. It was decreed farther that, as an envoy was shortly to be despatched to Saladin, acquainting him with the resolution of the council to resume hostilities so soon as the truce was ended, and as Richard proposed to send a valuable present to the Soldan, in acknowledgment of the high benefit he had derived from the services of El Hakim, the two unhappy creatures should be added to it as curiosities, which, from their extremely grotesque appearance, and the shattered state of their intellect, were [illegible] that might well pass between sovereign and sovereign.

Richard had that day yet another female encounter to sustain; but he advanced to it with comparative indifference. Edith, though beautiful, and highly esteemed by her [illegible] relative — nay, although she had from his unjust suspicions actually sustained the injury of which Berengaria only affected to complain — still was neither Richard's wife nor mistress, and he feared her reproaches less, although founded in reason, than those of the Queen, though unjust and fantastical. Having requested to speak with her apart, he was ushered into her apartment, adjoining that of the Queen, whose two female Coptish slaves remained on their knees in the most remote corner during the interview. A thin black veil extended its

ample folds over the tall and graceful form of the high-born maiden, and she wore not upon her person any female ornament of what kind soever. She arose and made a low reverence when Richard entered, resumed her seat at his command, and, when he sat down beside her, waited, without uttering a syllable, until he should communicate his pleasure.

Richard, whose custom it was to be familiar with Edith, as their relationship authorised, felt this reception chilling, and opened the conversation with some embarrassment.

'Our fair cousin,' he at length said, 'is angry with us; and we own that strong circumstances have induced us, without cause, to suspect her of conduct alien to what we have ever known in her course of life. But while we walk in this misty valley of humanity, men will mistake shadows for substances. Can my fair cousin not forgive her somewhat vehement kinsman, Richard?'

'Who can refuse forgiveness to *Richard*,' answered Edith, 'provided Richard can obtain pardon of the *king*?'

'Come, my kinswoman,' replied Cœur-de-Lion, 'this is all too solemn. By Our Lady, such a melancholy countenance, and this ample sable veil, might make men think thou wert a new-made widow, or had lost a betrothed lover, at least. Cheer up; thou hast heard doubtless that there is no real cause for woe, why then keep up the form of mourning?'

'For the departed honour of Plantagenet — for the glory which hath left my father's house.'

Richard frowned. 'Departed honour! glory which hath left our house!' he repeated, angrily; 'but my cousin Edith is privileged. I have judged her too hastily, she has therefore a right to deem of me too harshly. But tell me at least in what I have faulted.'

'Plantagenet,' said Edith, 'should have either pardoned an offence or punished it. It misbecomes him to assign free men, Christians, and brave knights to the fetters of the infidels. It becomes him not to compromise and barter, or to grant life under the forfeiture of liberty. To have doomed the unfortunate to death might have been severity, but had a show of justice; to condemn him to slavery and exile was barefaced tyranny.'

'I see, my fair cousin,' said Richard, 'you are of those pretty ones who think an absent lover as bad as none, or as a dead one. Be patient; half a score of light horsemen may yet follow and redeem the error, if thy gallant have in keeping any

secret which might render his death more convenient than his banishment.'

'Peace with thy scurrile jests,' answered Edith, colouring deeply. 'Think rather that, for the indulgence of thy mood, thou hast lopped from this great enterprise one goodly limb, deprived the Cross of one of its most brave supporters, and placed a servant of the true God in the hands of the heathen; hast given, too, to minds as suspicious as thou hast shown thine own in this matter some right to say that Richard Cœur-de-Lion banished the bravest soldier in his camp, lest his name in battle might match his own.'

'I—I!' exclaimed Richard, now indeed greatly moved — 'am I one to be jealous of renown? I would he were here to profess such an equality! I would waive my rank and my crown, and meet him, manlike, in the lists, that it might appear whether Richard Plantagenet had room to fear or to envy the prowess of mortal man. Come, Edith, thou think'st not as thou say'st. Let not anger or grief for the absence of thy lover make thee unjust to thy kinsman, who, notwithstanding all thy tetchiness, values thy good report as high as that of any one living.'

'The absence of my lover!' said the Lady Edith. 'But yes, he may be well termed my lover who hath paid so dear for the title. Unworthy as I might be of such homage, I was to him like a light, leading him forward in the noble path of chivalry; but that I forgot my rank, or that he presumed beyond his, is false, were a king to speak it.'

'My fair cousin,' said Richard, 'do not put words in my mouth which I have not spoken. I said not you had graced this man beyond the favour which a good knight may earn, even from a princess, whatever be his native condition. But, by Our Lady, I know something of this love-gear: it begins with mute respect and distant reverence, but when opportunities occur, familiarity increases, and so —— But it skills not talking with one who thinks herself wiser than all the world.'

'My kinsman's counsels I willingly listen to when they are such,' said Edith, 'as convey no insult to my rank and character.'

'Kings, my fair cousin, do not counsel, but rather command,' said Richard.

'Soldans do indeed command,' said Edith, 'but it is because they have slaves to govern.'

'Come, you might learn to lay aside this scorn of Soldanrie, when you hold so high of a Scot,' said the King. 'I hold

Saladin to be truer to his word than this William of Scotland, who must needs be called a Lion forsooth: he hath foully faulted towards me, in failing to send the auxiliary aid he promised. Let me tell thee, Edith, thou mayst live to prefer a true Turk to a false Scot.'

'No — never!' answered Edith, 'not should Richard himself embrace the false religion, which he crossed the seas to expel from Palestine.'

'Thou wilt have the last word,' said Richard, 'and thou shalt have it. Even think of me what thou wilt, pretty Edith. I shall not forget that we are near and dear cousins.'

So saying, he took his leave in fair fashion, but very little satisfied with the result of his visit.

It was the fourth day after Sir Kenneth had been dismissed from the camp; and King Richard sat in his pavilion, enjoying an evening breeze from the west, which, with unusual coolness on her wings, seemed breathed from Merry England for the refreshment of her adventurous monarch, as he was gradually recovering the full strength which was necessary to carry on his gigantic projects. There was no one with him, De Vaux having been sent to Ascalon to bring up reinforcements and supplies of military munition, and most of his other attendants being occupied in different departments, all preparing for the re-opening of hostilities, and for a grand preparatory review of the army of the Crusaders, which was to take place the next day. The King sat listening to the busy hum among the soldiery, the clatter from the forges, where horseshoes were preparing, and from the tents of the armourers, who were repairing harness; the voice of the soldiers too, as they passed and repassed, [illegible] loud and cheerful, carrying with its very tone an assurance [illegible] high and excited courage, and an omen of approaching victory. While Richard's ear drank in these sounds with delight, and while he yielded himself to the visions of conquest and of glory which they suggested, an equerry told him that a messenger from Saladin waited without.

'Admit him instantly,' said the King, 'and with due honour, Josceline.'

The English knight accordingly introduced a person, apparently of no higher rank than a Nubian slave, whose appearance was nevertheless highly interesting. He was of superb stature and nobly formed, and his commanding features, although almost jet-black, showed nothing of negro descent. He wore

over his coal-black locks a milk-white turban, and over his shoulders a short mantle of the same colour, open in front and at the sleeves, under which appeared a doublet of dressed leopard's skin reaching within a handbreadth of the knee. The rest of his muscular limbs, both legs and arms, were bare, excepting that he had sandals on his feet, and wore a collar and bracelets of silver. A straight broadsword, with a handle of boxwood, and a sheath covered with snake-skin, was suspended from his waist. In his right hand he held a short javelin, with a broad, bright, steel head, of a span in length, and in his left he led, by a leash of twisted silk and gold, a large and noble staghound.

The messenger prostrated himself, at the same time partially uncovering his shoulders, in sign of humiliation, and having touched the earth with his forehead, arose so far as to rest on one knee, while he delivered to the King a silken napkin, inclosing another of cloth of gold, within which was a letter from Saladin in the original Arabic, with a translation into Norman-English, which may be modernised thus:

'Saladin, King of Kings, to Melech Ric, the Lion of England. Whereas, we are informed by thy last message that thou hast chosen war rather than peace, and our enmity rather than our friendship, we account thee as one blinded in this matter, and trust shortly to convince thee of thine error, by the help of our invincible forces of the thousand tribes, when Mohammed, the Prophet of God, and Allah, the God of the Prophet, shall judge the controversy betwixt us. In what remains, we make noble account of thee, and of the gifts which thou hast sent us, and of the two dwarfs, singular in their deformity as Ysop, and mirthful as the lute of Isaack. And in requital of these tokens from the treasure-house of thy bounty, behold we have sent thee a Nubian slave, named Zohauk, of whom judge not by his complexion, according to the foolish ones of the earth, in respect the dark-rinded fruit hath the most exquisite flavour. Know that he is strong to execute the will of his master, as Rustan of Zablestan; also he is wise to give counsel when thou shalt learn to hold communication with him, for the lord of speech hath been stricken with silence betwixt the ivory walls of our palace. We commend him to thy care, hoping the hour may not be distant when he may render thee good service. And herewith we bid thee farewell; trusting that our most holy Prophet may yet call thee to a sight of the truth, failing

which illumination, our desire is, for the speedy restoration of thy royal health, that Allah may judge between thee and us in a plain field of battle.'

And the missive was sanctioned by the signature and seal of the Soldan.

Richard surveyed the Nubian in silence as he stood before him, his looks bent upon the ground, his arms folded on his bosom, with the appearance of a black marble statue of the most exquisite workmanship, waiting life from the touch of a Prometheus. The King of England, who, as it was emphatically said of his successor Henry the Eighth, loved to look upon A MAN, was well pleased with the thewes, sinews, and symmetry of him whom he now surveyed, and questioned him in the *lingua franca*, 'Art thou a pagan?'

The slave shook his head, and raising his finger to his brow, crossed himself in token of his Christianity, then resumed his posture of motionless humility.

'A Nubian Christian, doubtless,' said Richard, 'and mutilated of the organ of speech by these heathen dogs?'

The mute again slowly shook his head, in token of negative, pointed with his forefinger to Heaven, and then laid it upon his own lips.

'I understand thee,' said Richard; 'thou dost suffer under the infliction of God, not by the cruelty of man. Canst thou clean an armour and belt, and buckle it in time of need?'

The mute nodded, and stepping towards the coat of mail, which hung, with the shield and helmet of the chivalrous monarch, upon the pillar of the tent, handled it with such nicety of address as sufficiently to show that he fully understood the business of the armour-bearer.

'Thou art an apt, and wilt doubtless be a useful, knave; thou shalt wait in my chamber and on my person,' said the King, 'to show how much I value the gift of the royal Soldan. If thou hast no tongue, it follows thou canst carry no tales, neither provoke me to be sudden by any unfit reply.'

The Nubian again prostrated himself till his brow touched the earth, then stood erect, at some paces distant, as waiting for his new master's commands.

'Nay, thou shalt commence thy office presently,' said Richard, 'for I see a speck of rust darkening on that shield; and when I shake it in the face of Saladin, it should be bright and unsullied as the Soldan's honour and mine own.'

A horn was winded without, and presently Sir Henry Neville entered with a packet of despatches. 'From England, my lord,' he said, as he delivered it.

'From England — our own England!' repeated Richard, in a tone of melancholy enthusiasm. 'Alas! they little think how hard their sovereign has been beset by sickness and sorrow, faint friends and forward enemies.' Then opening the despatches, he said hastily, 'Ha! this comes from no peaceful land: they too have their feuds. Neville, begone; I must peruse these tidings alone, and at leisure.'

Neville withdrew accordingly, and Richard was soon absorbed in the melancholy details which had been conveyed to him from England, concerning the factions that were tearing to pieces his native dominions: the disunion of his brothers, John and Geoffrey, and the quarrels of both with the High Justiciary Longchamp, Bishop of Ely; the oppressions practised by the nobles upon the peasantry, and rebellion of the latter against their masters, which had produced everywhere scenes of discord, and in some instances the effusion of blood. Details of incidents mortifying to his pride, and derogatory from his authority, were interningled with the earnest advice of his wisest and most attached counsellors, that he should presently return to England, as his presence offered the only hope of saving the kingdom from all the horrors of civil discord, of which France and Scotland were likely to avail themselves. Filled with the most painful anxiety, Richard read, and again read, the ill-omened letters, compared the intelligence which some of them contained with the same facts as differently stated in others, and soon became totally insensible to whatever was passing around him, although seated, for the sake of coolness, close to the entrance of his tent, and having the curtains withdrawn, so that he could see and be seen by the guards and others who were stationed without.

Deeper in the shadow of the pavilion, and busied with the task his new master had imposed, sat the Nubian slave, with his back rather turned towards the King. He had finished adjusting and cleaning the hauberk and brigandine, and was now busily employed on a broad pavesse, or buckler, of unusual size, and covered with steel-plating, which Richard often used in reconnoitring, or actually storming fortified places, as a more effectual protection against missile weapons than the narrow triangular shield used on horseback. This pavesse bore neither the royal lions of England nor any other device, to attract the

observation of the defenders of the walls against which it was advanced; the care, therefore, of the armourer was addressed to causing its surface to shine as bright as crystal, in which he seemed to be peculiarly successful. Beyond the Nubian, and scarce visible from without, lay the large dog, which might be termed his brother slave, and which, as if he felt awed by being transferred to a royal owner, was couched close to the side of the mute, with head and ears on the ground, and his limbs and tail drawn close around and under him.

While the monarch and his new attendant were thus occupied, another actor crept upon the scene, and mingled among the group of English yeomen, about a score of whom, respecting the unusually pensive posture and close occupation of their sovereign, were, contrary to their wont, keeping a silent guard in front of his tent. It was not, however, more vigilant than usual. Some were playing at games of hazard with small pebbles, others spoke together in whispers of the approaching day of battle, and several lay asleep, their bulky limbs folded in their green mantles.

Amid these careless warders glided the puny form of a little old Turk, poorly dressed like a marabout or santon of the desert — a sort of enthusiasts, who sometimes ventured into the camp of the Crusaders, though treated always with contumely, and often with violence. Indeed, the luxury and profligate indulgence of the Christian leaders had occasioned a motley concourse in their tents of musicians, courtezans, Jewish merchants, Copts, Turks, and all the varied refuse of the Eastern nations; so that the caftan and turban, though to drive both from the Holy Land was the professed object of the expedition, were nevertheless neither an uncommon nor an alarming sight in the camp of the Crusaders. When, however, the little insignificant figure we have described approached so nigh as to receive some interruption from the warders, he dashed his dusky green turban from his head, showed that his beard and eyebrows were shaved like those of a professed buffoon, and that the expression of his fantastic and writhen features, as well as of his little black eyes, which glittered like jet, was that of a crazed imagination.

'Dance, marabout,' cried the soldiers, acquainted with the manners of these wandering enthusiasts — 'dance, or we will scourge thee with our bow-strings, till thou spin as never top did under schoolboy's lash.' Thus shouted the reckless warders, as much delighted at having a subject to teaze as a child when

he catches a butterfly, or a schoolboy upon discovering a bird's nest.

The marabout, as if happy to do their behests, bounded from the earth and spun his giddy round before them with singular agility, which, when contrasted with his slight and wasted figure, and diminutive appearance, made him resemble a withered leaf twirled round and around at the pleasure of the winter's breeze. His single lock of hair streamed upwards from his bald and shaven head, as if some genie upheld him by it: and indeed it seemed as if supernatural art were necessary to the execution of the wild whirling dance, in which scarce the tiptoe of the performer was seen to touch the ground. Amid the vagaries of his performance, he flew here and there, from one spot to another, still approaching, however, though almost imperceptibly, to the entrance of the royal tent; so that, when at length he sunk exhausted on the earth, after two or three bounds still higher than those which he had yet executed, he was not above thirty yards from the King's person.

'Give him water,' said one yeoman; 'they always crave a drink after their merry-go-round.'

'Aha, water, say'st thou, Long Allen?' exclaimed another archer, with a most scornful emphasis on the despised element; 'how wouldst like such beverage thyself, after such a morrice-dancing?'

'The devil a water-drop he gets here,' said a third. 'We will teach the light-footed old infidel to be a good Christian, and drink wine of Cyprus.'

'Ay — ay,' said a fourth; 'and in case he be restive, fetch thou Dick Hunter's horn, that he drenches his mare withal.'

A circle was instantly formed around the prostrate and exhausted dervise, and while one tall yeoman raised his feeble form from the ground, another presented to him a huge flagon of wine. Incapable of speech, the old man shook his head and waved away from him with his hand the liquor forbidden by the Prophet; but his tormentors were not thus to be appeased.

'The horn — the born!' exclaimed one. 'Little difference between a Turk and a Turkish horse, and we will use him conforming.'

'By St. George, you will choke him!' said Long Allen; 'and, besides, it is a sin to throw away upon a heathen dog as much wine as would serve a good Christian for a treble night-cap.'

'Thou know'st not the nature of these Turks and pagans,

Long Allen,' replied Henry Woodstall; 'I tell thee, man, that this flagon of Cyprus will set his brains a-spinning, just in the opposite direction that they went whirling in the dancing, and so bring him, as it were, to himself again. Choke! he will no more choke on it than Ben's black bitch on the pound of butter.'

'And for grudging it,' said Tomalin Blacklees, 'why shouldst thou grudge the poor paynim devil a drop of drink on earth, since thou know'st he is not to have a drop to cool the tip of his tongue through a long eternity?'

'That were hard laws, look ye,' said Long Allen, 'only for being a Turk, as his father was before him. Had he been Christian turned heathen, I grant you the hottest corner had been good winter quarters for him.'

'Hold thy peace, Long Allen,' said Henry Woodstall; 'I tell thee that tongue of thine is not the shortest limb about thee, and I prophesy that it will bring thee into disgrace with Father Francis, as once about the black-eyed Syrian wench. But here comes the horn. Be active a bit, man, wilt thou, and just force open his teeth with the haft of thy dudgeon-dagger?'

'Hold — hold, he is conformable,' said Tomalin; 'see — see, he signs for the goblet; give him room, boys. *Oop sey es*, quoth the Dutchman: down it goes like lamb's-wool! Nay, they are true topers when once they begin: your Turk never coughs in his cup, or stints in his liquoring.'

In fact, the dervise, or whatever he was, drank, or at least seemed to drink, the large flagon to the very bottom at a single pull; and when he took it from his lips, after the whole contents were exhausted, only uttered with a deep sigh, the words '*Allah kerim*,' or God is merciful. There was a laugh among the yeomen who witnessed this pottle-deep potation, so obstreperous as to rouse and disturb the King, who, raising his finger, said, angrily, 'How, knaves, no respect, no observance?'

All were at once hushed into silence, well acquainted with the temper of Richard, which at some times admitted of much military familiarity, and at others exacted the most precise respect, although the latter humour was of much more rare occurrence. Hastening to a more reverent distance from the royal person, they attempted to drag along with them the marabout, who, exhausted apparently by previous fatigue, or overpowered by the potent draught he had just swallowed, resisted being moved from the spot, both with struggles and groans.

'Leave him still, ye fools,' whispered Long Allen to his mates; 'by St. Christopher, you will make our Dickon go beside himself, and we shall have his dagger presently fly at our costards. Leave him alone, in less than a minute he will sleep like a dormouse.'

At the same moment, the monarch darted another impatient glance to the spot, and all retreated in haste, leaving the dervise on the ground, unable, as it seemed, to stir a single limb or joint of his body. In a moment afterward, all was as still and quiet as it had been before the intrusion.

CHAPTER XXI

> And wither'd murder,
> Alarum'd by his sentinel, the wolf,
> Whose howl 's his watch, thus with his stealthy pace,
> With Tarquin's ravishing strides, towards his design
> Moves like a ghost.
>
> *Macbeth.*

FOR the space of a quarter of an hour, or longer, after the incident related, all remained perfectly quiet in the front of the royal habitation. The King read, and mused in the entrance of his pavilion; behind, and with his back turned to the same entrance, the Nubian slave still burnished the ample pavesse; in front of all, at an hundred paces distant, the yeomen of the guard stood, sat, or lay extended on the grass, attentive to their own sports, but pursuing them in silence, while on the esplanade betwixt them and the front of the tent lay, scarcely to be distinguished from a bundle of rags, the senseless form of the marabout.

But the Nubian had the advantage of a mirror, from the brilliant reflection which the surface of the highly-polished shield now afforded, by means of which he beheld, to his alarm and surprise, that the marabout raised his head gently from the ground, so as to survey all around him, moving with a well-adjusted precaution, which seemed entirely inconsistent with a state of ebriety. He couched his head instantly, as if satisfied he was unobserved, and began, with the slightest possible appearance of voluntary effort, to drag himself, as if by chance, ever nearer and nearer to the King, but stopping, and remaining fixed at intervals, like the spider, which, moving towards her object, collapses into apparent lifelessness when she thi she is the subject of observation. This species of moven appeared suspicious to the Ethiopian, who, on his part, pr pared himself, as quietly as possible, to interfere, the instant that interference should seem to be necessary.

The marabout meanwhile glided on gradually and imperceptibly, serpent-like, or rather snail-like, till he was about ten yards' distance from Richard's person, when, starting on his feet, he sprung forward with the bound of a tiger, stood at the King's back in less than an instant, and brandished aloft the cangiar, or poniard, which he had hidden in his sleeve. Not the presence of his whole army could have saved their heroic monarch; but the motions of the Nubian had been as well calculated as those of the enthusiast, and ere the latter could strike, the former caught his uplifted arm. Turning his fanatical wrath upon what thus unexpectedly interposed betwixt him and his object, the Charegite, for such was the seeming marabout, dealt the Nubian a blow with the dagger, which, however, only grazed his arm, while the far superior strength of the Ethiopian easily dashed him to the ground. Aware of what had passed, Richard had now arisen, and, with little more of surprise, anger, or interest of any kind in his countenance than an ordinary man would show in brushing off and crushing an intrusive wasp, caught up the stool on which he had been sitting, and exclaiming only, 'Ha, dog!' dashed almost to pieces the skull of the assassin, who uttered twice, once in a loud and once in a broken tone, the words '*Allah ackbar*' (God is victorious) and expired at the King's feet.

'Ye are careful warders,' said Richard to his archers, in a tone of scornful reproach, as, aroused by the bustle of what had passed, in terror and tumult they now rushed into his tent — 'watchful sentinels ye are, to leave me to do such hangman's work with my own hand. Be silent all of you, and cease your senseless clamour; saw ye never a dead Turk before? Here — cast that carrion out of the camp, strike the head from the trunk, and stick it on a lance, taking care to turn the face to Mecca, that he may the easier tell the foul impostor, on whose inspiration he came hither, how he has sped on his errand. For thee, my swart and silent friend ——' he added, turning to th Ethiopian. 'But how's this? thou art wounded; and with a poisoned weapon, I warrant me, for by force of stab so weak an animal as that could scarce hope to do more than raze the lion's hide. Suck the poison from his wound one of you: the venom is harmless on the lips, though fatal when it mingles with the blood.'

The yeomen looked on each other confusedly and with hesitation, the apprehension of so strange a danger prevailing with those who feared no other.

'How now, sirrahs,' continued e King, 'are you dainty-lipped, or do you fear death, that you dally thus?'

'Not the death of a man,' said Long Allen, to whom the King looked as he spoke; 'but methinks I would not die like a poisoned rat for the sake of a b' chattel there, that is bought and sold in a market like a Martlemas ox.'

'His Grace speaks to men of sucking poison,' muttered another yeoman, 'as if he said, "Go to, swallow a gooseberry"!'

'Nay,' said Richard, 'I never bade man do that which I would not do myself.'

And, without farther ceremony, and in spite of the general expostulations of those around, and the respectful opposition of the Nubian himself, the King of England applied his lips to the wound of the black slave, treating with ridicule all remonstrances and overpowering all resistance. He had no sooner intermitted his singular occupation than the Nubian started from him, and, casting a scarf over his arm, intimated by gestures, as firm in purpose as they were respectful in manner, his determination not to permit the monarch to renew so degrading an employment.

Long Allen also interposed, saying, that 'If it were necessary to prevent the King engaging again in a treatment of this kind, his own lips, tongue, and teeth were at the service of the negro (as he called the Ethiopian), and that he would eat him up ere 'ily, rather than King Richard's mouth should again approach him.'

Neville, who entered with other officers, added his remonstrances.

'Nay — nay, make not a needless halloo about a hart that the hounds have lost, or a danger when it is over,' said the King; 'the wound will be a trifle, for the blood is scarce drawn — an angry cat had dealt a deeper scratch; and for me, I have but to take a drachm of orvietan by way of precaution, 'ough it is needless.'

Thus spoke Richard, a little ashamed, perhaps, of his own condescension, though sanctioned both by humanity and gratitude. But when Neville continued to make remonstrances on the peril to his royal person, the King imposed silence on him.

'Peace, I prithee, make no more of it; I did it but to show these ignorant prejudiced knaves how they might help each other when these cowardly caitiffs come against us with sarbacanes and poisoned shafts. But,' he added, 'take thee this Nubian to thy quarters, Neville. I have changed my mind touching him; let him be well cared for. But, hark in thine

ear — see that he escapes thee not; there is more in him than seems. Let him have all liberty, so that he leave not the camp. And you, ye beef-devouring, wine-swilling English mastiffs, get ye to your guard again, and be sure you keep it more warily. Think not you are now in your own land of fair play, where men speak before they strike, and shake hands ere they cut throats. Danger in our land walks openly, and with his blade drawn, and defies the foe whom he means to assault: but here, he challenges you with a silk glove instead of a steel gauntlet, cuts your throat with the feather of a turtle-dove, stabs you with the tongue of a priest's brooch, or throttles you with the lace of my lady's boddice. Go to, keep your eyes open and your mouths shut, drink less and look sharper about you; or I will place your huge stomachs on such short allowance as would pinch the stomach of a patient Scottishman.'

The yeomen, abashed and mortified, withdrew to their post, and Neville was beginning to remonstrate with his master upon the risk of passing over thus slightly their negligence upon their duty, and the propriety of an example in a case so peculiarly aggravated as the permitting one so suspicious as the marabout to approach within dagger's length of his person, when Richard interrupted him with, 'Speak not of it, Neville; wouldst thou have me avenge a petty risk to myself more severely than the loss of England's banner? It has been stolen — stolen by a thief, or delivered up by a traitor, and no blood has been shed for it. My sable friend, thou art an expounder of mysteries, saith the illustrious Soldan; now would I give thee thine own weight in gold, if, by raising one still blacker than thyself, or by what other means thou wilt, thou couldst show me the thief who did mine honour that wrong. What say'st thou — ha?'

The mute seemed desirous to speak, but uttered only that imperfect sound proper to his melancholy condition, then folded his arms, looked on the King with an eye of intelligence, and nodded in answer to his question.

'How!' said Richard, with joyful impatience. 'Wilt thou undertake to make discovery in this matter?'

The Nubian slave repeated the same motion.

'But how shall we understand each other?' said the King. 'Canst thou write, good fellow?'

The slave again nodded in assent.

'Give him writing-tools,' said the King. 'They were readier in my father's tent than mine, but they be somewhere about

if this scorching climate have not dried up the ink. Why, this fellow is a jewel — a black diamond, Neville.'

'So please you, my liege,' said Neville, 'if I might speak my poor mind, it were ill dealing in this ware. This man must be a wizard, and wizards deal with the Enemy, who hath most interest to sow tares among the wheat, and bring dissension into our councils, and ——'

'Peace, Neville,' said Richard. 'Halloo to your Northern hound when he is close on the haunch of the deer, and hope to recall him, but seek not to stop Plantagenet when he hath hope to retrieve his honour.'

The slave, who during this discussion had been writing, in which art he seemed skilful, now arose, and pressing what he had written to his brow, prostrated himself as usual, ere he delivered it into the King's hands. The scroll was in French, although their intercourse had hitherto been conducted by Richard in the *lingua franca*.

'To Richard, the conquering and invincible King of England, this from the humblest of his slaves. Mysteries are the sealed caskets of Heaven, but wisdom may devise means to open the lock. Were your slave stationed where the leaders of the Christian host were made to pass before him in order, doubt nothing that, if he who did the injury whereof my King complains shall be among the number, he may be made manifest in his iniquity, though it be hidden under seven veils.'

'Now, by St. George!' said King Richard, 'thou hast spoken most opportunely. Neville, thou know'st that, when we muster our troops to-morrow, the princes have agreed that, to expiate the affront offered to England in the theft of her banner, the leaders should pass our new standard as it floats on St. George's Mount, and salute it with formal regard. Believe me, the secret traitor will not dare to absent himself from an expurgation so solemn, lest his very absence should be matter of suspicion. There will we place our sable man of counsel, and, if his art can detect the villain, leave me to deal with him.'

'My liege,' said Neville, with the frankness of an English baron, 'beware what work you begin. Here is the concord of our holy league unexpectedly renewed; will you, upon such suspicion as a negro slave can instil, tear open wounds so lately closed, or will you use the solemn procession, adopted for the reparation of your honour, and establishment of unanimity amongst the discording princes, as the means of again finding

out new cause of offence, or reviving ancient quarrels? It were scarce too strong to say, this were a breach of the declaration your Grace made to the assembled council of the Crusade.'

'Neville,' said the King, sternly interrupting him, 'thy zeal makes thee presumptuous and unmannerly. Never did I promise to abstain from taking whatever means were most promising to discover the infamous author of the attack on my honour. Ere I had done so, I would have renounced my kingdom — my life. All my declarations were under this necessary and absolute qualification; only, if Austria had stepped forth and owned the injury like a man, I proffered, for the sake of Christendom, to have forgiven *him*.'

'But,' continued the baron, anxiously, 'what hope that this juggling slave of Saladin will not palter with your Grace?'

'Peace, Neville,' said the King; 'thou think'st thyself mighty wise and art but a fool. Mind thou my charge touching this fellow; there is more in him than thy Westmoreland wit can fathom. And thou, swart and silent, prepare to perform the feat thou hast promised, and, by the word of a king, thou shalt choose thine own recompense. Lo, he writes again.

The mute accordingly wrote and delivered to the King, with the same form as before, another slip of paper, containing these words: 'The will of the King is the law to his slave; nor doth it become him to ask guerdon for discharge of his devoir.'

'*Guerdon* and *devoir!*' said the King, interrupting himself as he read, and speaking to Neville in the English tongue, with some emphasis on the words. 'These Eastern people will profit by the Crusaders: they are acquiring the language of chivalry. And see, Neville, how discomposed that fellow looks; were it not for his colour he would blush. I should not think it strange if he understood what I say: they are perilous linguists.'

'The poor slave cannot endure your Grace's eye,' said Neville; 'it is nothing more.'

'Well, but,' continued the King, striking the paper with his finger, as he proceeded, 'this bold scroll proceeds to say, that our trusty mute is charged with a message from Saladin to the Lady Edith Plantagenet, and craves means and opportunity to deliver it. What think'st thou of a request so modest — ha, Neville?'

'I cannot say,' said Neville, 'how such freedom may relish with your Grace; but the lease of the messenger's neck would be a short one, who should carry such a request to the Soldan on the part of your Majesty.'

'Nay, I thank Heaven that I covet none of his sunburnt beauties,' said Richard; 'and for punishing this fellow for discharging his master's errand, and that when he has just saved my life, methinks it were something too summary. I'll tell thee, Neville, a secret — for, although our sable and mute minister be present, he cannot, thou know'st, tell it over again, even if he should chance to understand us — I tell thee, that for this fortnight past I have been under a strange spell, and I would I were disenchanted. There has no sooner any one done me good service, but lo you, he cancels his interest in me by some deep injury; and, on the other hand, he who hath deserved death at my hands for some treachery or some insult is sure to be the very person, of all others, who confers upon me some obligation that overbalances his demerits, and renders respite of his sentence a debt due from my honour. Thus, thou seest, I am deprived of the best part of my royal function, since I can neither punish men nor reward them. Until the influence of this disqualifying planet be passed away, I will say nothing concerning the request of this our sable attendant, save that it is an unusually bold one, and that his best chance of finding grace in our eyes will be, to endeavour to make the discovery which he proposes to achieve in our behalf. Meanwhile, Neville, do thou look well to him, and let him be honourably cared for. And hark thee once more,' he said in a low whisper, 'seek out yonder hermit of Engaddi, and bring him to me forthwith, be he saint or savage, madman or sane. Let me see him privately.'

Neville retired from the royal tent, signing to the Nubian to follow him, and much surprised at what he had seen and heard, and especially at the unusual demeanour of the King. In general, no task was so easy as to discover Richard's immediate course of sentiment and feeling, though it might, in some cases, be difficult to calculate its duration; for no weathercock obeyed the changing wind more readily than the King his gusts of passion. But, on the present occasion, his manner seemed unusually constrained and mysterious, nor was it easy to guess whether displeasure or kindness predominated in his conduct towards his new dependant, or in the looks with which, from time to time, he regarded him. The ready service which the King had rendered to counteract the bad effects of the Nubian's wound might seem to balance the obligation conferred on him by the slave, when he intercepted the blow of the assassin; but it seemed, as a much longer account remained to be arranged between them, that the monarch was doubtful

whether the settlement might leave him, upon the whole, debtor or creditor, and that, therefore, he assumed, in the meantime, a neutral demeanour, which might suit with either character. As for the Nubian, by whatever means he had acquired the art of writing the European languages, the King remained convinced that the English tongue at least was unknown to him, since, having watched him closely during the last part of the interview, he conceived it impossible for any one understanding a conversation, of which he was himself the subject, to have so completely avoided the appearance of taking an interest in it.

CHAPTER XXII

Who 's there? Approach — 't is kindly done —
My learned physician and a friend.

SIR EUSTACE GREY.

OUR narrative retrogrades to a period shortly previous to the incidents last mentioned, when, as the reader must remember, the unfortunate Knight of the Leopard, bestowed upon the Arabian physician by King Richard, rather as a slave than in any other capacity, was exiled from the camp of the Crusaders, in whose ranks he had so often and so brilliantly distinguished himself. He followed his new master, for so we must now term the Hakim, to the Moorish tents which contained his retinue and his property, with the stupified feelings of one who, fallen from the summit of a precipice, and escaping unexpectedly with life, is just able to drag himself from the fatal spot, but without the power of estimating the extent of the damage which he has sustained. Arrived at the tent, he threw himself, without speech of any kind, upon a couch of dressed buffalo's hide, which was pointed out to him by his conductor, and, hiding his face betwixt his hands, groaned heavily, as if his heart were on the point of bursting. The physician heard him, as he was giving orders to his numerous domestics to prepare for their departure the next morning before daybreak, and, moved with compassion, interrupted his occupation to sit down, cross-legged, by the side of his couch, and administer comfort according to the Oriental manner.

'My friend,' he said, 'be of good comfort; for what sayeth the poet — "It is better that a man should be the servant of a kind master than the slave of his own wild passions." Again, be of good courage; because, whereas Ysouf ben Yagoube was sold to a king by his brethren, even to Pharaoh king of Egypt, thy king hath, on the other hand, bestowed thee on one who will be to thee as a brother.'

Sir Kenneth made an effort to thank the Hakim; but his heart was too full, and the indistinct sounds which accompanied his abortive attempts to reply induced the kind physician to desist from his premature endeavours at consolation. He left his new domestic, or guest, in quiet, to indulge his sorrows, and having commanded all the necessary preparations for their departure on the morning, sat down upon the carpet of the tent and indulged himself in a moderate repast. After he had thus refreshed himself, similar viands were offered to the Scottish knight; but though the slaves let him understand that the next day would be far advanced ere they would halt for the purpose of refreshment, Sir Kenneth could not overcome the disgust which he felt against swallowing any nourishment, and could be prevailed upon to taste nothing, saving a draught of cold water.

He was awake, long after his Arab host had performed his usual devotions and betaken himself to his repose, nor had sleep visited him at the hour of midnight, when a movement took place among the domestics, which, though attended with no speech, and very little noise, made him aware they were loading the camels and preparing for departure. In the course of these preparations, the last person who was disturbed, excepting the physician himself, was the Knight of Scotland, whom, about three in the morning, a sort of major-domo, or master of the household, acquainted that he must arise. He did so, without farther answer, and followed him into the moonlight, where stood the camels, most of which were already loaded, and one only remained kneeling until its burden should be completed.

A little apart from the camels stood a number of horses ready bridled and saddled, and the Hakim himself, coming forth, mounted on one of them with as much agility as the grave decorum of his character permitted, and directed another, which he pointed out, to be led towards Sir Kenneth. An English officer was in attendance to escort them through the camp of the Crusaders, and to ensure their leaving it in safety, and all was ready for their departure. The pavilion which they had left was, in the meanwhile, struck with singular despatch, and the tent-poles and coverings composed the burden of the last camel; when the physician pronouncing solemnly the verse of the Koran, 'God be our guide, and Mohammed our protector, in the desert as in the watered field,' the whole cavalcade was instantly in motion.

In traversing the camp, they were challenged by the various

sentinels who maintained guard there, and suffered to proceed in silence, or with a muttered curse upon their prophet, as they passed the post of some more zealous Crusader. At length, the last barriers were left behind them, and the party formed themselves for the march with military precaution. Two or three horsemen advanced in front as a vanguard; one or two remained a bow-shot in the rear; and, wherever the ground admitted, others were detached to keep an outlook on the flanks. In this manner they proceeded onward, while Sir Kenneth, looking back on the moonlight camp, might now indeed seem banished, deprived at once of honour and of liberty, from the glimmering banners under which he had hoped to gain additional renown, and the tented dwellings of chivalry, of Christianity, and — of Edith Plantagenet.

The Hakim, who rode by his side, observed, in his usual tone of sententious consolation — 'It is unwise to look back when the journey lieth forward'; and as he spoke, the horse of the knight made such a perilous stumble as threatened to add a practical moral to the tale.

The knight was compelled by this hint to give more attention to the management of his steed, which more than once required the assistance and support of the check-bridle, although, in other respects, nothing could be more easy at once and active than the ambling pace at which the animal, which was a mare, proceeded.

'The conditions of that horse,' observed the sententious physician, 'are like those of human fortune; seeing that amidst his most swift and easy pace the rider must guard himself against a fall, and that it is when prosperity is at the highest that our prudence should be awake and vigilant, to prevent misfortune.'

The overloaded appetite loathes even the honeycomb, and it is scarce a wonder that the knight, mortified and harassed with misfortunes and abasement, became something impatient of hearing his misery made, at every turn, the ground of proverbs and apothegms, however just and apposite.

'Methinks,' he said, rather peevishly, 'I wanted no additional illustration of the instability of fortune; though I would thank thee, sir Hakim, for thy choice of a steed for me, would the jade but stumble so effectually as at once to break my neck and her own.'

'My brother,' answered the Arab sage, with imperturbable gravity, 'thou speakest as one of the foolish. Thou say'st in

thy heart, that the sage should have given thee as his guest the younger and better horse, and reserved the old one for himself; but know, that the defects of the older steed may be compensated by the energies of the young rider, whereas the violence of the young horse requires to be moderated by the cold temper of the older.'

So spoke the sage; but neither to this observation did Sir Kenneth return any answer which could lead to a continuance of their conversation, and the physician, wearied, perhaps, of administering comfort to one who would not be comforted, signed to one of his retinue.

'Hassan,' he said, 'hast thou nothing wherewith to beguile the way?'

Hassan, story-teller and poet by profession, spurred up, upon this summons, to exercise his calling. 'Lord of the palace of life,' he said, addressing the physician, 'thou, before whom the angel Azrael spreadeth his wings for flight — thou, wiser than Solimaun ben Daoud, upon whose signet was inscribed the REAL NAME which controls the spirits of the elements — forbid it, Heaven, that, while thou travellest upon the track of benevolence, bearing healing and hope wherever thou comest, thine own course should be saddened for lack of the tale and of the song. Behold, while thy servant is at thy side, he will pour forth the treasures of his memory, as the fountain sendeth her stream beside the pathway, for the refreshment of him that walketh thereon.'

After this exordium, Hassan uplifted his voice, and began a tale of love and magic, intermixed with feats of warlike achievement, and ornamented with abundant quotations from the Persian poets, with whose compositions the orator seemed familiar. The retinue of the physician, such excepted as were necessarily detained in attendance on the camels, thronged up to the narrator, and pressed as close as deference for their master permitted, to enjoy the delight which the inhabitants of the East have ever derived from this species of exhibition.

At another time, notwithstanding his imperfect knowledge of the language, Sir Kenneth might have been interested in the recitation, which, though dictated by a more extravagant imagination, and expressed in more inflated and metaphorical language, bore yet a strong resemblance to the romances of chivalry, then so fashionable in Europe. But as matters stood with him, he was scarcely even sensible that a man in the centre of the cavalcade recited and sung, in a low tone, for nearly two

hours, modulating his voice to the various moods of passion introduced into the tale, and receiving, in return, now low murmurs of applause, now muttered expressions of wonder, now sighs and tears, and sometimes, what it was far more difficult to extract from such an audience, a tribute of smiles, and even laughter.

During the recitation, the attention of the exile, however abstracted by his own deep sorrow, was occasionally awakened by the low wail of a dog, secured in a wicker inclosure suspended on one of the camels, which, as an experienced woodsman, he had no hesitation in recognising to be that of his own faithful hound; and from the plaintive tone of the animal, he had no doubt that he was sensible of his master's vicinity, and, in his way, invoking his assistance for liberty and rescue.

'Alas! poor Roswal,' he said, 'thou callest for aid and sympathy upon one in stricter bondage than thou thyself art. I will not seem to heed thee, or return thy affection, since it would serve but to load our parting with yet more bitterness.'

Thus passed the hours of night, and the space of dim hazy dawn which forms the twilight of a Syrian morning. But when the very first lines of the sun's disk began to rise above the level horizon, and when the very first level ray shot glimmering in dew along the surface of the desert, which the travellers had now attained, the sonorous voice of El Hakim himself overpowered and cut short the narrative of the tale-teller, while he caused to resound along the sands the solemn summons which the muezzins thunder at morning from the minaret of every mosque.

'To prayer — to prayer! God is the one God. To prayer — to prayer! Mohammed is the prophet of God. To prayer — to prayer! Time is flying from you. To prayer — to prayer! Judgment is drawing nigh to you.'

In an instant each Moslem cast himself from his horse, turned his face towards Mecca, and performed with sand an imitation of those ablutions which were elsewhere required to be made with water, while each individual, in brief but fervent ejaculations, recommended himself to the care, and his sins to the forgiveness, of God and the Prophet.

Even Sir Kenneth, whose reason at once and prejudices were offended by seeing his companions in that which he considered as an act of idolatry, could not help respecting the sincerity of their misguided zeal, and being stimulated by their fervour to apply supplications to Heaven in a purer form, wondering,

meanwhile, what new-born feelings could teach him to accompany in prayer, though with varied invocation, those very Saracens, whose heathenish worship he had conceived a crime dishonourable to the land in which high miracles had been wrought, and where the day-star of redemption had arisen.

The act of devotion, however, though rendered in such strange society, burst purely from his natural feelings of religious duty, and had its usual effect in composing the spirits, which had been long harassed by so rapid a succession of calamities. The sincere and earnest approach of the Christian to the throne of the Almighty teaches the best lesson of patience under affliction; since wherefore should we mock the Deity with supplications, when we insult Him by murmuring under His decrees? or how, while our prayers have in every word admitted the vanity and nothingness of the things of time in comparison to those of eternity, should we hope to deceive the Searcher of Hearts, by permitting the world and worldly passions to reassume the reins even immediately after a solemn address to Heaven? But Sir Kenneth was not of these. He felt himself comforted and strengthened, and better prepared to execute or submit to whatever his destiny might call upon him to do or to suffer.

Meanwhile, the party of Saracens regained their saddles and continued their route, and the tale-teller, Hassan, resumed the thread of his narrative; but it was no longer to the same attentive audience. A horseman, who had ascended some high ground on the right hand of the little column, had returned on a speedy gallop to El Hakim, and communicated with him. Four or five more cavaliers had then been despatched, and the little band, which might consist of about twenty or thirty persons, began to follow them with their eyes, as men from whose gestures, and advance or retreat, they were to augur good or evil. Hassan, finding his audience inattentive, or being himself attracted by the dubious appearances on the flank, stinted in his song; and the march became silent, save when a camel-driver called out to his patient charge, or some anxious follower of the Hakim communicated with his next neighbour in a hurried and low whisper.

This suspense continued until they had rounded a ridge, composed of hillocks of sand, which concealed from their main body the object that had created this alarm among their scouts. Sir Kenneth could now see, at the distance of a mile or more, a dark object moving rapidly on the bosom of the desert, which his experienced eye recognised for a party of cavalry, much

superior to their own in numbers, and, from the thick and frequent flashes which flung back the level beams of the rising sun, it was plain that these were Europeans in their complete panoply.

The anxious looks which the horsemen of El Hakim now cast upon their leader seemed to indicate deep apprehension; while he, with gravity as undisturbed as when he called his followers to prayer, detached two of his best-mounted cavaliers, with instructions to approach as closely as prudence permitted to these travellers of the desert, and observe more minutely their numbers, their character, and, if possible, their purpose. The approach of danger, or what was feared as such, was like a stimulating draught to one in apathy, and recalled Sir Kenneth to himself and his situation.

'What fear you from these Christian horsemen, for such they seem?' he said to the Hakim.

'Fear!' said El Hakim, repeating the word disdainfully. 'The sage fears nothing but Heaven, but ever expects from wicked men the worst which they can do.'

'They are Christians,' said Sir Kenneth, 'and it is the time of truce; why should you fear a breach of faith?'

'They are the priestly soldiers of the Temple,' answered El Hakim, '—hose vow limits them to know neither truth nor faith with the worshippers of Islam. May the Prophet blight them, both root, branch, and twig! Their peace is war, and their faith is falsehood. Other invaders of Palestine have their times and moods of courtesy. The lion Richard will spare when he has conquered; the eagle Philip will close his wing when he has stricken a prey; even the Austrian bear will sleep when he is gorged; but this horde of ever-hungry wolves know neither pause nor satiety in their rapine. Seest thou not that they are detaching a party from their main body, and that they take an eastern direction? Yon are their pages and squires, whom they train up in their accursed mysteries, and whom, as lighter mounted, they send to cut us off from our watering-place. But they will be disappointed: *I* know the war of the desert yet better than they.'

He spoke a few words to his principal officer, and his whole demeanour and countenance was at once changed from the solemn repose of an Eastern sage, accustomed more to contemplation than to action, into the prompt and proud expression of a gallant soldier, whose energies are roused by the near approach of a danger which he at once foresees and despises.

To Sir Kenneth's eyes the approaching crisis had a different aspect, and when Adonbec said to him, 'Thou must tarry close by my side,' he answered solemnly in the negative.

'Yonder,' he said, 'are my comrades in arms — the men in whose society I have vowed to fight or fall. On their banner gleams the sign of our most blessed redemption; I cannot fly from the Cross in company with the Crescent.'

'Fool!' said the Hakim; 'their first action would be to do thee to death, were it only to conceal their breach of the truce.'

'Of that I must take my chance,' replied Sir Kenneth; 'but I wear not the bonds of the infidels an instant longer than I can cast them from me.'

'Then will I compel thee to follow me,' said El Hakim.

'Compel!' answered Sir Kenneth, angrily. 'Wert thou not my benefactor, or one who has showed will to be such, and were it not that it is to thy confidence I owe the freedom of these hands, which thou mightst have loaded with fetters, I would show thee that, unarmed as I am, compulsion would be no easy task.'

'Enough — enough,' replied the Arabian physician, 'we lose time even when it is becoming precious.'

So saying, he threw his arm aloft, and uttered a loud and shrill cry, as a signal to those of his retinue, who instantly dispersed themselves on the face of the desert, in as many different directions as a chaplet of beads when the string is broken. Sir Kenneth had no time to note what ensued; for, at the same instant, the Hakim seized the rein of his steed, and putting his own to its metal, both sprung forth at once with the suddenness of light, and at a pitch of velocity which almost deprived the Scottish knight of the power of respiration, and left him absolutely incapable, had he been desirous, to have checked the career of his guide. Practised as Sir Kenneth was in horsemanship from his earliest youth, the speediest horse he had ever mounted was a tortoise in comparison to those of the Arabian sage. They spurned the sand from behind them — they seemed to devour the desert before them — miles flew away with minutes, and yet their strength seemed unabated, and their respiration as free as when they first started upon the wonderful race. The motion, too, as easy as it was swift, seemed more like flying through the air than riding on the earth, and was attended with no unpleasant sensation, save the awe naturally felt by one who is moving at such astonishing

speed, and the difficulty of breathing occasioned by their passing through the air so rapidly.

It was not until after an hour of this portentous motion, and when all human pursuit was far, far behind, that the Hakim at length relaxed his speed, and, slackening the pace of the horses into a hand-gallop, began, in a voice as composed and even as if he had been walking for the last hour, a descant upon the excellence of his coursers to the Scot, who, breathless, half blind, half deaf, and altogether giddy, from the rapidity of this singular ride, hardly comprehended the words which flowed so freely from his companion.

'These horses,' he said, 'are of the breed called the Winged, equal in speed to aught excepting the Borak of the Prophet. They are fed on the golden barley of Yemen, mixed with spices, and with a small portion of dried sheep's flesh. Kings have given provinces to possess them, and their age is active as their youth. Thou, Nazarene, art the first, save a true believer, that ever had beneath his loins one of this noble race, a gift of the Prophet himself to the blessed Ali, his kinsman and lieutenant, well called the Lion of God. Time lays his touch so lightly on these generous steeds, that the mare on which thou now sittest has seen five times five years pass over her, yet retains her pristine speed and vigour, only that in the career the support of a bridle, managed by a hand more experienced than thine, hath now become necessary. May the Prophet be blessed, who hath bestowed on the true believers the means of advance and retreat, which causeth their iron-clothed enemies to be worn out with their own ponderous weight! How the horses of yonder dog Templars must have snorted and blown, when they had toiled fetlock-deep in the desert for one-twentieth part of the space which these brave steeds have left behind them, without one thick pant, or a drop of moisture upon their sleek and velvet coats!'

The Scottish knight, who had now begun to recover his breath and powers of attention, could not help acknowledging in his heart the advantage possessed by these Eastern warriors in a race of animals alike proper for advance or retreat, and so admirably adapted to the level and sandy deserts of Arabia and Syria. But he did not choose to augment the pride of the Moslem by acquiescing in his proud claim of superiority, and therefore suffered the conversation to drop, and, looking around him, could now, at the more moderate pace at which they moved, distinguish that he was in a country not unknown to him.

The blighted borders and sullen waters of the Dead Sea, the ragged and precipitous chain of mountains arising on the left, the two or three palms clustered together, forming the single green speck on the bosom of the waste wilderness — objects which, once seen, were scarcely to be forgotten — showed to Sir Kenneth that they were approaching the fountain called the Diamond of the Desert, which had been the scene of his interview on a former occasion with the Saracen Emir Sheerkohf, or Ilderim. In a few minutes they checked their horses beside the spring, and the Hakim invited Sir Kenneth to descend from horseback, and repose himself as in a place of safety. They unbridled their steeds, El Hakim observing that farther care of them was unnecessary, since they would be speedily joined by some of the best-mounted among his slaves, who would do what farther was needful.

'Meantime,' he said, spreading some food on the grass, 'eat and drink, and be not discouraged. Fortune may raise up or abase the ordinary mortal, but the sage and the soldier should have minds beyond her control.'

The Scottish knight endeavoured to testify his thanks by showing himself docile; but though he strove to eat out of complaisance, the singular contrast between his present situation and that which he had occupied on the same spot, when the envoy of princes and the victor in combat, came like a cloud over his mind, and fasting, lassitude, and fatigue oppressed his bodily powers. El Hakim examined his hurried pulse, his red and inflamed eye, his heated hand, and his shortened respiration.

'The mind,' he said, 'grows wise by watching, but her sister the body, of coarser materials, needs the support of repose. Thou must sleep; and that thou mayst do so to refreshment, thou must take a draught mingled with this elixir.'

He drew from his bosom a small crystal vial, cased in silver filigree-work, and dropped into a little golden drinking-cup a small portion of a dark-coloured fluid.

'This,' he said, 'is one of those productions which Allah hath sent on earth for a blessing, though man's weakness and wickedness have sometimes converted it into a curse. It is powerful as the wine-cup of the Nazarene to drop the curtain on the sleepless eye, and to relieve the burden of the overloaded bosom; but when applied to the purposes of indulgence and debauchery, it rends the nerves, destroys the strength, weakens the intellect, and undermines life. But fear not thou to use its virtues in

the time of need, for the wise man warms him by the same firebrand with which the madman burneth the tent.'[1]

'I have seen too much of thy skill, sage Hakim,' said Sir Kenneth, 'to debate thine hest'; and swallowed the narcotic, mingled as it was with some water from the spring, then wrapped him in the haik, or Arab cloak, which had been fastened to his saddle-pommel, and, according to the directions of the physician, stretched himself at ease in the shade to await the promised repose. Sleep came not at first, but in her stead a train of pleasing, yet not rousing or awakening, sensations. A state ensued in which, still conscious of his own identity and his own condition, the knight felt enabled to consider them not only without alarm and sorrow, but as composedly as he might have viewed the story of his misfortunes acted upon a stage, or rather as a disembodied spirit might regard the transactions of its past existence. From this state of repose, amounting almost to apathy respecting the past, his thoughts were carried forward to the future, which, in spite of all that existed to overcloud the prospect, glittered with such hues as, under much happier auspices, his unstimulated imagination had not been able to produce, even in its most exalted state. Liberty, fame, successful love, appeared to be the certain, and not very distant, prospect of the enslaved exile, the dishonoured knight, even of the despairing lover, who had placed his hopes of happiness so far beyond the prospect of chance, in her wildest possibilities, serving to countenance his wishes. Gradually, as the intellectual sight became overclouded, these gay visions became obscure, like the dying hues of sunset, until they were at last lost in total oblivion; and Sir Kenneth lay extended at the feet of El Hakim, to all appearance, but for his deep respiration, as inanimate a corpse as if life had actually departed.

[1] Some preparation of opium seems to be intimated.

CHAPTER XXIII

'Mid these wild scenes enchantment waves her hand,
To change the face of the mysterious land;
Till the bewildering scenes around us seem
The vain productions of a feverish dream.

Astolpho, a Romance.

WHEN the Knight of the Leopard awoke from his long and profound repose, he found himself in circumstances so different from those in which he had lain down to sleep, that he doubted whether he was not still dreaming, or whether the scene had not been changed by magic. Instead of the damp grass, he lay on a couch of more than Oriental luxury, and some kind hands had, during his repose, stripped him of the cassock of chamois which he wore under his armour, and substituted a night-dress of the finest linen, and a loose gown of silk. He had been canopied only by the palm-trees of the desert, but now he lay beneath a silken pavilion, which blazed with the richest colours of the Chinese loom, while a slight curtain of gauze, displayed around his couch, was calculated to protect his repose from the insects, to which he had, ever since his arrival in these climates, been a constant and passive prey. He looked around, as if to convince himself that he was actually awake, and all that fell beneath his eye partook of the splendour of his dormitory. A portable bath of cedar, lined with silver, was ready for use, and steamed with the odours which had been used in preparing it. On a small stand of ebony beside the couch stood a silver vase, containing sherbet of the most exquisite quality, cold as snow, and which the thirst that followed the use of the strong narcotic rendered peculiarly delicious. Still farther to dispel the dregs of intoxication which it had left behind, the knight resolved to use the bath, and experienced in doing so a delightful refreshment. Having dried himself with napkins of the Indian wool, he would willingly have resumed his own coarse garments, that he might

go forth to see whether the world was as much changed without as within the place of his repose. These, however, were nowhere to be seen, but in their place he found a Saracen dress of rich materials, with sabre and poniard, and all befitting an emir of distinction. He was able to suggest no motive to himself for this exuberance of care, excepting a suspicion that these attentions were intended to shake him in his religious profession; as indeed it was well known that the high esteem of the European knowledge and courage made the Soldan unbounded in his gifts to those who, having become his prisoners, had been induced to take the turban. Sir Kenneth, therefore, crossing himself devoutly, resolved to set all such snares at defiance; and that he might do so the more firmly, conscientiously determined to avail himself as moderately as possible of the attentions and luxuries thus liberally heaped upon him. Still, however, he felt his head oppressed and sleepy, and aware, too, that his undress was not fit for appearing abroad, he reclined upon the couch, and was again locked in the arms of slumber.

But this time his rest was not unbroken, for he was awakened by the voice of the physician at the door of the tent, inquiring after his health, and whether he had rested sufficiently. 'May I enter your tent?' he concluded, 'for the curtain is drawn before the entrance.'

'The master,' replied Sir Kenneth, determined to show that he was not surprised into forgetfulness of his own condition, 'need demand no permission to enter the tent of the slave.'

'But if I come not as a master?' said El Hakim, still without entering.

'The physician,' answered the knight, 'hath free access to the bedside of his patient.'

'Neither come I now as a physician,' replied El Hakim; 'and therefore I still request permission ere I come under the covering of thy tent.'

'Whoever comes as a friend,' said Sir Kenneth, 'and such thou hast hitherto shown thyself to me, the habitation of the friend is ever open to him.'

'Yet once again,' said the Eastern sage, after the periphrastical manner of his countrymen, 'supposing that I come not as a friend?'

'Come as thou wilt,' said the Scottish knight, somewhat impatient of this circumlocution — 'be what thou wilt, thou knowest well it is neither in my power nor my inclination to refuse thee entrance.'

'I come, then,' said El Hakim, 'as your ancient foe; but a fair and a generous one.'

He entered as he spoke; and when he stood before the bedside of Sir Kenneth, the voice continued to be that of Adonbec, the Arabian physician, but the form, dress, and features were those of Ilderim of Kurdistan, called Sheerkohf. Sir Kenneth gazed upon him, as if he expected the vision to depart, like something created by his imagination.

'Doth it so surprise thee,' said Ilderim, 'and thou an approved warrior, to see that a soldier knows somewhat of the art of healing? I say to thee, Nazarene, that an accomplished cavalier should know how to dress his steed as well as how to ride him; how to forge his sword upon the stithy, as well as how to use it in battle; how to burnish his arms, as well as how to wear them; and, above all, how to cure wounds as well as how to inflict them.'

As he spoke, the Christian knight repeatedly shut his eyes, and while they remained closed, the idea of the Hakim, with his long, flowing, dark robes, high Tartar cap, and grave gestures, was present to his imagination; but so soon as he opened them, the graceful and richly-gemmed turban, the light hauberk of steel rings entwisted with silver, which glanced brilliantly as it obeyed every inflection of the body, the features freed from their formal expression, less swarthy, and no longer shadowed by the mass of hair (now limited to a well-trimmed beard), announced the soldier and not the sage.

'Art thou still so much surprised,' said the Emir, 'and hast thou walked in the world with such little observance, as to wonder that men are not always what they seem? Thou thyself—art thou what thou seemest?'

'No, by St. Andrew!' exclaimed the knight; 'for, to the whole Christian camp I seem a traitor, and I know myself to be a true, though an erring, man.'

'Even so I judged thee,' said Ilderim, 'and as we had eaten salt together, I deemed myself bound to rescue thee from death and contumely. But wherefore lie you still on your couch, since the sun is high in the heavens? or are the vestments which my sumpter-camels have afforded unworthy of your wearing?'

'Not unworthy, surely, but unfitting for it,' replied the Scot; 'give me the dress of a slave, noble Ilderim, and I will don it with pleasure; but I cannot brook to wear the habit of the free Eastern warrior, with the turban of the Moslem.'

'Nazarene,' answered the Emir, 'thy nation so easily entertain suspicion, that it may well render themselves suspected. Have I not told thee that Saladin desires no converts saving those whom the holy Prophet shall dispose to submit themselves to his law? Violence and bribery are alike alien to his plan for extending the true faith. Hearken to me, my brother. When the blind man was miraculously restored to sight, the scales dropped from his eyes at the Divine pleasure; think'st thou that any earthly leech could have removed them? No. Such mediciner might have tormented the patient with his instruments, or perhaps soothed him with his balsams and cordials, but dark as he was must the darkened man have remained; and it is even so with the blindness of the understanding. If there be those among the Franks who, for the sake of worldly lucre, have assumed the turban of the Prophet, and followed the laws of Islam, with their own consciences be the blame. Themselves sought out the bait; it was not flung to them by the Soldan. And when they shall hereafter be sentenced, as hypocrites, to the lowest gulf of Hell, below Christian and Jew, magician and idolater, and condemned to eat the fruit of the tree Yacoun, which is the heads of demons, to themselves, not to the Soldan, shall their guilt and their punishment be attributed. Wherefore wear, without doubt or scruple, the vesture prepared for you, since, if you proceed to the camp of Saladin, your own native dress will expose you to troublesome observation, and perhaps to insult.'

'*If* I go to the camp of Saladin?' said Sir Kenneth, repeating the words of the Emir. 'Alas! am I a free agent, and rather must I *not* go wherever your pleasure carries me?'

'Thine own will may guide thine own motions,' said the Emir, 'as freely as the wind which moveth the dust of the desert in what direction it chooseth. The noble enemy who met, and wellnigh mastered, my sword cannot become my slave like him who has crouched beneath it. If wealth and power would tempt thee to join our people, I could ensure thy possessing them; but the man who refused the favours of the Soldan when the axe was at his head will not, I fear, now accept them, when I tell him he has his free choice.'

'Complete your generosity, noble Emir,' said Sir Kenneth, 'by forbearing to show me a mode of requital which conscience forbids me to comply with. Permit me rather to express, as bound in courtesy, my gratitude for this most chivalrous bounty, this undeserved generosity.'

'Say not undeserved,' replied the Emir Ilderim; 'was it not through thy conversation, and thy account of the beauties which grace the court of the Melech Ric, that I ventured me thither in disguise, and thereby procured a sight the most blessed that I have ever enjoyed — that I ever shall enjoy, until the glories of Paradise beam on my eyes?'

'I understand you not,' said Sir Kenneth, colouring alternately and turning pale, as one who felt that the conversation was taking a tone of the most painful delicacy.

'Not understand me!' exclaimed the Emir. 'If the sight I saw in the tent of King Richard escaped thine observation, I will account it duller than the edge of a buffoon's wooden falchion. True, thou wert under sentence of death at the time; but, in my case, had my head been dropping from the trunk, the last strained glances of my eyeballs had distinguished with delight such a vision of loveliness, and the head would have rolled itself towards the incomparable houris, to kiss with its quivering lips the hem of their vestments. Yonder royalty of England, who for her superior loveliness deserves to be queen of the universe, what tenderness in her blue eye, what lustre in her tresses of dishevelled gold! By the tomb of the Prophet, I scarce think that the houri who shall present to me the diamond cup of immortality will deserve so warm a caress!'

'Saracen,' said Sir Kenneth, sternly, 'thou speakest of the wife of Richard of England, of whom men think not and speak not as a woman to be won, but as a queen to be revered.'

'I cry you mercy,' said the Saracen. 'I had forgotten your superstitious veneration for the sex, which you consider rather fit to be wondered at and worshipped than wooed and possessed. I warrant, since thou exactest such profound respect to yonder tender piece of frailty, whose every motion, step, and look bespeaks her very woman, less than absolute adoration must not be yielded to her of the dark tresses and nobly-speaking eye. *She*, indeed, I will allow, hath in her noble port and majestic mien something at once pure and firm; yet even she, when pressed by opportunity and a forward lover, would, I warrant thee, thank him in her heart rather for treating her as a mortal than as a goddess.'

'Respect the kinswoman of Cœur-de-Lion!' said Sir Kenneth, in a tone of unrepressed anger.

'Respect her!' answered the Emir, in scorn; 'by the Caaba, and if I do, it shall be rather as the bride of Saladin.'

'The infidel Soldan is unworthy to salute even a spot that

has been pressed by the foot of Edith Plantagenet,' exclaimed the Christian, springing from his couch.

'Ha! what said the Giaour?' exclaimed the Emir, laying his hand on his poniard hilt, while his forehead glowed like glancing copper, and the muscles of his lips and cheeks wrought till each curl of his beard seemed to twist and screw itself, as if alive with instinctive wrath. But the Scottish knight, who had stood the lion-anger of Richard, was unappalled at the tiger-like mood of the chafed Saracen.

'What I have said,' continued Sir Kenneth, with folded arms and dauntless look, 'I would, were my hands loose, maintain on foot or horseback against all mortals; and would hold it not the most memorable deed of my life to support it with my good broadsword against a score of these sickles and bodkins,' pointing at the curved sabre and small poniard of the Emir.

The Saracen recovered his composure as the Christian spoke, so far as to withdraw his hand from his weapon, as if the motion had been without meaning; but still continued in deep ire.

'By the sword of the Prophet,' he said, 'which is the key both of Heaven and Hell, he little values his own life, brother, who uses the language thou dost. Believe me, that were thine hands loose, as thou term'st it, one single true believer would find them so much to do, that thou wouldst soon wish them fettered again in manacles of iron.'

'Sooner would I wish them hewn off by the shoulder-blades,' replied Sir Kenneth.

'Well. Thy hands are bound at present,' said the Saracen, in a more amicable tone — 'bound by thine own gentle sense of courtesy, nor have I any present purpose of setting them at liberty. We have proved each other's strength and courage ere now, and we may again meet in a fair field; and shame befall him who shall be the first to part from his foeman! But now we are friends, and I look for aid from thee, rather than hard terms or defiances.'

'We *are* friends,' repeated the knight; and there was a pause, during which the fiery Saracen paced the tent, like the lion, who, after violent irritation, is said to take that method of cooling the distemperature of his blood, ere he stretches himself to repose in his den. The colder European remained unaltered in posture and aspect; yet he, doubtless, was also engaged in subduing the angry feelings which had been so unexpectedly awakened.

'Let us reason of this calmly,' said the Saracen; 'I am a

physician, as thou know'st, and it is written, that he who would have his wound cured must not shrink when the leech probes and tents it. Seest thou, I am about to lay my finger on the sore. Thou lovest this kinswoman of the Melech Ric. Unfold the veil that shrouds thy thoughts — or unfold it not if thou wilt, for mine eyes see through its coverings.'

'I *loved* her,' answered Sir Kenneth, after a pause, 'as a man loves Heaven's grace, and sued for her favour like a sinner for Heaven's pardon.'

'And you love her no longer?' said the Saracen.

'Alas,' answered Sir Kenneth, 'I am no longer worthy to love her. I pray thee cease this discourse: thy words are poniards to me.'

'Pardon me but a moment,' continued Ilderim. 'When thou, a poor and obscure soldier, didst so boldly and so highly fix thine affection, tell me, hadst thou good hope of its issue?'

'Love exists not without hope,' replied the knight; 'but mine was as nearly allied to despair as that of the sailor swimming for his life, who, as he surmounts billow after billow, catches by intervals some gleam of the distant beacon, which shows him there is land in sight, though his sinking heart and wearied limbs assure him that he shall never reach it.'

'And now,' said Ilderim, 'these hopes are sunk — that solitary light is quenched for ever?'

'For ever,' answered Sir Kenneth, in the tone of an echo from the bosom of a ruined sepulchre.

'Methinks,' said the Saracen, 'if all thou lackest were some such distant meteoric glimpse of happiness as thou hadst formerly, thy beacon-light might be rekindled, thy hope fished up from the ocean in which it has sunk, and thou thyself, good knight, restored to the exercise and amusement of nourishing thy fantastic passion upon a diet as unsubstantial as moonlight; for, if thou stood'st to-morrow fair in reputation as ever thou wert, she whom thou lovest will not be less the daughter of princes and the elected bride of Saladin.'

'I would it so stood,' said the Scot, 'and if I did not ——'

He stopt short, like a man who is afraid of boasting, under circumstances which did not permit his being put to the test. The Saracen smiled as he concluded the sentence.

'Thou wouldst challenge the Soldan to single combat?' said he.

'And if I did,' said Sir Kenneth, haughtily, 'Saladin's would

neither he the first nor the best turban that I have couched lance at.'

'Ay, but methinks the Soldan might regard it as too unequal a mode of perilling the chance of a royal bride, and the event of a great war,' said the Emir.

'He may be met with in the front of battle,' said the knight, his eyes gleaming with the ideas which such a thought inspired.

'He has been ever found there,' said Ilderim; 'nor is it his wont to turn his horse's head from any brave encounter. But it was not of the Soldan that I meant to speak. In a word, if it will content thee to be placed in such reputation as may be attained by detection of the thief who stole the banner of England, I can put thee in a fair way of achieving this task. That is, if thou wilt be governed; for what says Lokman, "If the child would walk, the nurse must lead him; if the ignorant would understand, the wise must instruct."'

'And thou art wise, Ilderim,' said the Scot — 'wise though a Saracen, and generous though an infidel. I have witnessed that thou art both. Take, then, the guidance of this matter; and so thou ask nothing of me contrary to my loyalty and my Christian faith, I will obey thee punctually. Do what thou hast said, and take my life when it is accomplished.'

'Listen thou to me then,' said the Saracen. 'Thy noble hound is now recovered, by the blessing of that divine medicine which healeth man and beast, and by his sagacity shall those who assailed him be discovered.'

'Ha!' said the knight, 'methinks I comprehend thee: I — dull not to think of this!'

'I tell me,' added the Emir, 'hast thou any followers or rs in the camp by whom the animal may be known?'

'dismissed,' said Sir Kenneth, 'my old attendant, thy patient, with a varlet that waited on him, at the time when I expected to suffer death, giving him letters for my friends in Scotland; there are none other to whom the dog is familiar. But then my own person is well known — my very speech will betray me, in a camp where I have played no mean part for many months.'

'Both he and thou shall be disguised, so as to escape even close examination. I tell thee,' said the Saracen, 'that not thy ther in arms, not thy brother in blood, shall discover thee, if thou be guided by my counsels. Thou hast seen me do matters more difficult: he that can call the dying from the c kness of the shadow of death can easily cast a mist before

the eyes of the living. But mark me — there is still the condition annexed to this service, that thou deliver a letter of Saladin to the niece of the Melech Ric, whose name is as difficult to our Eastern tongue and lips as her beauty is delightful to our eyes.'

Sir Kenneth paused before he answered, and the Saracen observing his hesitation, demanded of him, 'If he feared to undertake this message?'

'Not if there were death in the execution,' said Sir Kenneth: 'I do but pause to consider whether it consists with my honour to bear the letter of the Soldan, or with that of the Lady Edith to receive it from a heathen prince.'

'By the head of Mohammed and by the honour of a soldier, by the tomb at Mecca and by the soul of my father,' said the Emir, 'I swear to thee that the letter is written in all honour and respect. The song of the nightingale will sooner blight the rose-bower she loves than will the words of the Soldan offend the ears of the lovely kinswoman of England.'

'Then,' said the knight, 'I will bear the Soldan's letter faithfully, as if I were his born vassal; understanding, that beyond this simple act of service, which I will render with fidelity, from me of all men he can least expect mediation or advice in this his strange love-suit.'

'Saladin is noble,' answered the Emir, 'and will not spur a generous horse to a leap which he cannot achieve. Come with me to my tent,' he added, 'and thou shalt be presently equipped with a disguise as unsearchable as midnight; so thou may'st walk the camp of the Nazarenes as if thou hadst on thy finger the signet of Giaougi.'[1]

[1] Perhaps the same with Gyges.

CHAPTER XXIV

A grain of dust,
Soiling our cup, will make our sense reject
Fastidiously the draught which we did thirst for;
A rusted nail, placed near the faithful compass,
Will sway it from the truth, and wreck the argosy.
Even this small cause of anger and disgust
Will break the bonds of amity 'mongst princes,
And wreck their noblest purposes.

The Crusade.

THE reader can now have little doubt who the Ethiopian slave really was, with what purpose he had sought Richard's camp, and wherefore and with what hope he now stood close to the person of that monarch, as, surrounded by his valiant peers of England and Normandy, Cœur-de-Lion stood on the summit of St. George's Mount, with the banner of England by his side, borne by the most goodly person in the army, being his own natural brother, William with the Long Sword, Earl of Salisbury, the offspring of Henry the Second's amour with the celebrated Rosamond of Woodstock.

From several expressions in the King's conversation with Neville on the preceding day, the Nubian was left in anxious doubt whether his disguise had not been penetrated, especially as that the King seemed to be aware in what manner the agency of the dog was expected to discover the thief who stole the banner, although the circumstance of such an animal's having been wounded on the occasion had been scarce mentioned in Richard's presence. Nevertheless, as the King continued to treat him in no other manner than his exterior required, the Nubian remained uncertain whether he was or was not discovered, and determined not to throw his disguise aside voluntarily.

Meanwhile, the powers of the various Crusading princes arrayed under their royal and princely leaders, swept in long order around the base of the little mound; and as those of each

different country passed by, their commanders advanced a step or two up the hill, and made a signal of courtesy to Richard and to the standard of England, 'in sign of regard and amity,' as the protocol of the ceremony heedfully expressed it, 'not of subjection or vassalage.' The spiritual dignitaries, who in those days veiled not their bonnets to created being, bestowed on the King and his symbol of command their blessing instead of rendering obeisance.

Thus the long files marched on, and, diminished as they were by so many causes, appeared still an iron host, to whom the conquest of Palestine might seem an easy task. The soldiers, inspired by the consciousness of united strength, sat erect in their steel saddles, while it seemed that the trumpets sounded more cheerfully shrill, and the steeds, refreshed by rest and provender, chafed on the bit, and trode the ground more proudly. On they passed, troop after troop, banners waving, spears glancing, plumes dancing, in long perspective - a host composed of different nations, complexions, languages, arms, and appearances, but all fired, for the time, with the holy yet romantic purpose of rescuing the distressed daughter of Zion from her thraldom, and redeeming the sacred earth, which more than mortal had trodden, from the yoke of the unbelieving pagan. And it must be owned, that if, in other circumstances, the species of courtesy rendered to the King of England by so many warriors from whom he claimed no natural allegiance had in it something that might have been thought humiliating, yet the nature and cause of the war were so fitted to his pre-eminently chivalrous character and renowned feats in arms, that claims which might elsewhere have been urged were there forgotten, and the brave did willing homage to the bravest, in an expedition where the most undaunted and energetic courage was necessary to success.

The good King was seated on horseback about half-way up the mount, a morion on his head, surmounted by a crown, which left his manly features exposed to public view, as with cool and considerate eye he perused each rank as it passed him, and returned the salutation of the leaders. His tunic was of sky-coloured velvet, covered with plates of silver, and his hose of crimson silk, slashed with cloth of gold. By his side stood the seeming Ethiopian slave, holding the noble dog in a leash, such as was used in woodcraft. It was a circumstance which attracted no notice, for many of the princes of the Crusade had introduced black slaves into their household, in imitation of

the barbarous splendour of the Saracens. Over the King's head streamed the large folds of the banner, and, as he looked to it from time to time, he seemed to regard a ceremony, indifferent to himself personally, as important, when considered as atoning an indignity offered to the kingdom which he ruled. In the background, and on the very summit of the mount, a wooden turret, erected for the occasion, held the Queen Berengaria and the principal ladies of the court. To this the King looked from time to time, and then ever and anon his eyes were turned on the Nubian and the dog, but only when such leaders approached as, from circumstances of previous ill-will, he suspected of being accessary to the theft of the standard, or whom he judged capable of a crime so mean.

Thus, he did not look in that direction when Philip Augustus of France approached at the head of his splendid troops of Gallic chivalry; nay, he anticipated the motions of the French king, by descending the mount as the latter came up the ascent, so that they met in the middle space, and blended their greetings so gracefully that it appeared they met in fraternal equality. The sight of the two greatest princes in Europe, in rank at once and power, thus publicly avowing their concord, called forth bursts of thundering acclaim from the Crusading host at many miles' distance, and made the roving Arab scouts of the desert alarm the camp of Saladin with intelligence that the army of the Christians was in motion. Yet who but the King of Kings can read the hearts of monarchs? Under this smooth show of courtesy, Richard nourished displeasure and suspicion against Philip, and Philip meditated withdrawing himself and his host from the army of the Cross, and leaving Richard to accomplish or fail in the enterprise with his own unassisted forces.

Richard's demeanour was different when the dark-armed knights and squires of the Temple chivalry approached — men with countenances bronzed to Asiatic blackness by the suns of Palestine, and the admirable state of whose horses and appointments far surpassed even that of the choicest troops of France and England. The King cast a hasty glance aside, but the Nubian stood quiet, and his trusty dog sat at his feet, watching, with a sagacious yet pleased look, the ranks which now passed before them. The King's look turned again on the chivalrous Templars, as the Grand Master, availing himself of his mingled character, bestowed his benediction on Richard as a priest, instead of doing him reverence as a military leader.

'The misproud and amphibious caitiff puts the monk upon me,' said Richard to the Earl of Salisbury. 'But, Longsword, we will let it pass. A punctilio must not lose Christendom the services of these experienced lances, because their victories have rendered them overweening. Lo you, here comes our valiant adversary, the Duke of Austria; mark his manner at l bearing, Longsword; and thou, Nubian, let the hound have full view of him. By Heaven, he brings his buffoons along with him!'

In fact, whether from habit, or, which is more likely, to intimate contempt of the ceremonial he was about to comply with, Leopold was attended by his *spruchsprecher* and his jester, and, as he advanced towards Richard, he whistled in what he wished to be considered as an indifferent manner, though his heavy features evinced the sullenness, mixed with the fear, with which a truant schoolboy may be seen to approach his master. As the reluctant dignitary made, with discomposed and sulky look, the obeisance required, the *spruchsprecher* shook his baton, and proclaimed, like a herald, that, in what he was now doing, the Archduke of Austria was not to be held derogating from the rank and privileges of a sovereign prince, to which the jester answered with a sonorous 'amen,' which provoked much laughter among the bystanders.

King Richard looked more than once at the Nubian and his dog; but the former moved not, nor did the latter strain at the leash, so that Richard said to the slave with some scorn, 'Thy success in this enterprise, my sable friend, even though thou hast brought thy hound's sagacity to back thine own, will not, I fear, place thee high in the rank of wizards, or much augment thy merits towards our person.'

The Nubian answered, as usual, only by a lowly obeisance.

Meantime the troops of the Marquis of Montserrat next passed in order before the King of England. That powerful and wily baron, to make the greater display of his forces, had divided them into two bodies. At the head of the first, consisting of his vassals and followers, and levied from his Syrian possessions, came his brother Enguerrand, and he himself followed, leading on a gallant band of twelve hundred Stradiots, a kind of light cavalry raised by the Venetians in their Dalmatian possessions, and of which they had entrusted the command to the Marquis, with whom the republic had many bonds of connexion. These Stradiots were clothed in a fashion partly European, but partaking chiefly of the Eastern fashion. They wore, indeed, short hauberks, but had over them parti-

coloured tunics of rich stuffs, with large wide pantaloons and half-boots. On their heads were straight upright caps, similar to those of the Greeks, and they carried small round targets, bows and arrows, scimitars, and poniards. They were mounted on horses, carefully selected, and well maintained at the expense of the state of Venice; their saddles and appointments resembled those of the Turks, and they rode in the same manner, with short stirrups and upon a high seat. These troops were of great use in skirmishing with the Arabs, though unable to engage in close combat, like the iron-sheathed men-at-arms of Western and Northern Europe.

Before this goodly band came Conrade, in the same garb with the Stradiots, but of such rich stuff that he seemed to blaze with gold and silver, and the milk-white plume fastened in his cap by a clasp of diamonds seemed tall enough to sweep the clouds. The noble steed which he reined bounded and caracoled, and displayed his spirit and agility in a manner which might have troubled a less admirable horseman than the Marquis, who gracefully ruled him with the one hand, while the other displayed the baton, whose predominancy over the ranks which he led seemed equally absolute. Yet his authority over the Stradiots was more in show than in substance; for there paced beside him, on an ambling palfrey of soberest mood, a little old man, dressed entirely in black, without beard or mustachios, and having an appearance altogether mean and insignificant, when compared with the blaze of splendour around him. But this mean-looking old man was one of those deputies whom the Venetian government sent into camps to overlook the conduct of the generals to whom the leading was consigned, and to maintain that jealous system of espial and control which had long distinguished the policy of the republic.

Conrade, who, by cultivating Richard's humour, had attained a certain degree of favour with him, no sooner was come within his ken than the King of England descended a step or two to meet him, exclaiming, at the same time, 'Ha, Lord Marquis, thou at the head of the fleet Stradiots, and thy black shadow attending thee as usual, whether the sun shines or not! May not one ask thee whether the rule of the troops remains with the shadow or the substance?'

Conrade was commencing his reply with a smile, when Roswal, the noble hound, uttering a furious and savage yell, sprung forward. The Nubian, at the same time, slipped the

leash, and the hound, rushing on, leapt upon Conrade's noble charger, and seizing the Marquis by the throat, pulled him down from the saddle. The plumed rider lay rolling on the sand, and the frightened horse fled in wild career through the camp.

'Thy hound hath pulled down the right quarry, I warrant him,' said the King to the Nubian, 'and I vow to St. George he is a stag of ten tynes. Pluck the dog off, lest he throttle him.'

The Ethiopian accordingly, though not without difficulty, disengaged the dog from Conrade, and fastened him up, still highly excited and struggling in the leash. Meanwhile, many crowded to the spot, especially followers of Conrade and officers of the Stradiots, who, as they saw their leader lie gazing wildly on the sky, raised him up amid a tumultuary cry of 'Cut the slave and his hound to pieces!'

But the voice of Richard, loud and sonorous, was heard clear above all other exclamations. 'He dies the death who injures the hound. He hath but done his duty, after the sagacity with which God and nature have endowed the brave animal. Stand forward for a false traitor, thou, Conrade Marquis of Montserrat. I impeach thee of treason.'

Several of the Syrian leaders had now come up, and Conrade, vexation, and shame, and confusion struggling with passion in his manner and voice, exclaimed, 'What means this? With what am I charged? Why this base usage and these reproachful terms? Is this the league of concord which England renewed but so lately?'

'Are the princes of the Crusade turned hares or deers in the eyes of King Richard, that he should slip hounds on them?' said the sepulchral voice of the Grand Master of the Templars.

'It must be some singular accident — some fatal mistake,' said Philip of France, who rode up at the same moment.

'Some deceit of the Enemy,' said the Archbishop of Tyre.

'A stratagem of the Saracens,' cried Henry of Champagne. 'It were well to hang up the dog, and put the slave to the torture.'

'Let no man lay hand upon them,' said Richard, 'as he loves his own life. Conrade, stand forth, if thou darest, and deny the accusation which this mute animal hath in his noble instinct brought against thee, of injury done to him and foul scorn to England?'

'I never touched the banner,' said Conrade, hastily.

'Thy words betray thee, Conrade!' said Richard; 'for how didst thou know, save from conscious guilt, that the question is concerning the banner?'

'Hast thou then not kept the camp in turmoil on that and no other score?' answered Conrade; 'and dost thou impute to a prince and an ally a crime which, after all, was probably committed by some paltry felon for the sake of the gold thread? Or wouldst thou now impeach a confederate on the credit of a dog?'

By this time the alarm was becoming general, so that Philip of France interposed.

'Princes and nobles,' he said, 'you speak in presence of those whose swords will soon be at the throats of each other, if they hear their leaders at such terms together. In the name of Heaven, let us draw off, each his own troops, into their separate quarters, and ourselves meet an hour hence in the pavilion of council, to take some order in this new state of confusion.'

'Content,' said King Richard, 'though I should have liked to have interrogated that caitiff while his gay doublet was yet besmirched with sand. But the pleasure of France shall be ours in this matter.'

The leaders separated as was proposed, each prince placing himself at the head of his own forces; and then was heard on all sides the crying of war-cries, and the sounding of gathering notes upon bugles and trumpets, by which the different stragglers were summoned to their prince's banner; and the troops were shortly seen in motion, each taking different routes through the camp to their own quarters. But although any immediate act of violence was thus prevented, yet the accident which had taken place dwelt on every mind; and those foreigners, who had that morning hailed Richard as the worthiest to lead their army, now resumed their prejudices against his pride and intolerance, while the English, conceiving the honour of their country connected with the quarrel, of which various reports had gone about, considered the natives of other countries jealous of the fame of England and her king, and disposed to undermine it by the meanest arts of intrigue. Many and various were the rumours spread upon the occasion, and there was one which averred that the Queen and her ladies had been much alarmed by the tumult, and that one of them had swooned.

The council assembled at the appointed hour. Conrade had in the meanwhile laid aside his dishonoured dress, and with it the shame and confusion which, in spite of his talents and promptitude, had at first overwhelmed him, owing to the strangeness of the accident and suddenness of the accusation. He was now robed like a prince, and entered the council-chamber attended by the Archduke of Austria, the Grand Masters both of the Temple and of the Order of St. John, and several other potentates, who made a show of supporting him and defending his cause, chiefly perhaps from political motives, or because they themselves nourished a personal enmity against Richard.

This appearance of union in favour of Conrade was far from influencing the King of England. He entered the council with his usual indifference of manner, and in the same dress in which he had just alighted from horseback. He cast a careless and somewhat scornful glance on the leaders, who had with studied affectation arranged themselves around Conrade, as if owning his cause, and in the most direct terms charged Conrade of Montserrat with having stolen the banner of England, and wounded the faithful animal who stood in its defence.

Conrade arose boldly to answer, and in despite, as he expressed himself, of man and brute, king or dog, avouched his innocence of the crime charged.

'Brother of England,' said Philip, who willingly assumed the character of moderator of the assembly, 'this is an unusal impeachment. We do not hear you avouch your own knowledge of this matter, farther than your belief resting upon the demeanour of this hound towards the Marquis of Montserrat. Surely the word of a knight and a prince should bear him out against the barking of a cur?'

'Royal brother,' returned Richard, 'recollect that the Almighty, who gave the dog to be companion of our pleasures and our toils, hath invested him with a nature noble and incapable of deceit. He forgets neither friend nor foe, remembers, and with accuracy, both benefit and injury. He hath a share of man's intelligence, but no share of man's falsehood. You may bribe a soldier to slay a man with his sword, or a witness to take life by false accusation; but you cannot make a hound tear his benefactor: he is the friend of man, save when man justly incurs his enmity. Dress yonder Marquis in what peacock-robes you will, disguise his appearance, alter his complexion with drugs and washes, hide him amidst an

hundred men; I will yet pawn my sceptre that the hound detects him, and expresses his resentment, as you have this day beheld. This is no new incident, although a strange one. Murderers and robbers have been, ere now, convicted, and suffered death under such evidence, and men have said that the finger of God was in it. In thine own land, royal brother, and upon such an occasion, the matter was tried by a solemn duel betwixt the man and the dog, as appellant and defendant in a challenge of murder. The dog was victorious; the man was punished, and the crime was confessed. Credit me, royal brother, that hidden crimes have often been brought to light by the testimony even of inanimate substances, not to mention animals far inferior in instinctive sagacity to the dog, who is the friend and companion of our race.'

'Such a duel there hath indeed been, royal brother,' answered Philip, 'and that in the reign of one of our predecessors, to whom God be gracious. But it was in the olden time, nor can we hold it a precedent fitting for this occasion. The defendant in that case was a private gentleman, of small rank or respect; his offensive weapons were only a club, his defensive a leathern jerkin. But we cannot degrade a prince to the disgrace of using such rude arms, or to the ignominy of such a combat.'

'I never meant that you should,' said King Richard; 'it were foul play to hazard the good hound's life against that of such a double-faced traitor as this Conrade hath proved himself. But there lies our own glove: we appeal him to the combat in respect of the evidence we brought forth against him. A king, at least, is more than the mate of a marquis.'

Conrade made no hasty effort to seize on the pledge which Richard cast into the middle of the assembly, and King Philip had time to reply, ere the Marquis made a motion to lift the glove.

'A king,' said he of France, 'is as much more than a match for the Marquis Conrade as a dog would be less. Royal Richard, this cannot be permitted. You are the leader of our expedition — the sword and buckler of Christendom.'

'I protest against such a combat,' said the Venetian *proveditore*, 'until the King of England shall have repaid the fifty thousand bezants which he is indebted to the republic. It is enough to be threatened with loss of our debt, should our debtor fall by the hands of the pagans, without the additional risk of his being slain in brawls amongst Christians concerning dogs and banners.'

'And I,' said William with the Long Sword, Earl of Salisbury, 'protest in my turn against my royal brother perilling his life, which is the property of the people of England, in such a cause. Here, noble brother, receive back your glove, and think only as if the wind had blown it from your hand. Mine shall lie in its stead. A king's son, though with the bar sinister on his shield, is at least a match for this marmoset of a marquis.'

'Princes and nobles,' said Conrade, 'I will not accept of King Richard's defiance. He hath been chosen our leader against the Saracens, and if *his* conscience can answer the accusation of provoking an ally to the field on a quarrel so frivolous, *mine*, at least, cannot endure the reproach of accepting it. But touching his bastard brother, William of Woodstock, or against any other who shall adopt, or shall dare to stand godfather to, this most false charge, I will defend my honour in the lists, and prove whoever impeaches it a false liar.'

'The Marquis of Montserrat,' said the Archbishop of Tyre, 'hath spoken like a wise and moderate gentleman; and methinks this controversy might, without dishonour to any party, end at this point.'

'Methinks it might so terminate,' said the King of France, 'provided King Richard will recall his accusation, as made upon over-slight grounds.'

'Philip of France,' answered Cœur-de-Lion, 'my words shall never do my thoughts so much injury. I have charged yonder Conrade as a thief, who, under cloud of night, stole from its place the emblem of England's dignity. I still believe and charge him to be such; and when a day is appointed for the combat, doubt not that, since Conrade declines to meet us in person, I will find a champion to appear in support of my challenge; for thou, William, must not thrust thy long sword into this quarrel without our special license.'

'Since my rank makes me arbiter in this most unhappy matter,' said Philip of France, 'I appoint the fifth day from hence for the decision thereof, by way of combat, according to knightly usage — Richard King of England to appear by his champion as appellant, and Conrade Marquis of Montserrat in his own person as defendant. Yet I own, I know not where to find neutral ground where such a quarrel may be fought out; for it must not be in the neighbourhood of this camp, where the soldiers would make faction on the different sides.'

'It were well,' said Richard, 'to apply to the generosity of

the royal Saladin, since, heathen as he is, I have never known knight more fulfilled of nobleness, or to whose good faith we may so peremptorily entrust ourselves. I speak thus for those who may be doubtful of mishap; for myself, wherever I see my foe, I make that spot my battle-ground.'

'Be it so,' said Philip; 'we will make this matter known to Saladin, although it be showing to an enemy the unhappy spirit of discord which we would willingly hide from even ourselves, were it possible. Meanwhile, I dismiss this assembly, and charge you all, as Christian men and noble knights, that ye let this unhappy feud breed no farther brawling in the camp, but regard it as a thing solemnly referred to the judgment of God, to whom each of you should pray that He will dispose of victory in the combat according to the truth of the quarrel; and therewith may His will be done!'

'Amen — amen!' was answered on all sides; while the Templar whispered the Marquis, 'Conrade, wilt thou not add a petition to be delivered from the power of the dog, as the Psalmist hath it?'

'Peace, thou ——!' replied the Marquis; 'there is a revealing demon abroad, which may report, amongst other tidings, how far thou dost carry the motto of thy order — *Feriatur leo.*'

'Thou wilt stand the brunt of challenge?' said the Templar.

'Doubt me not,' said Conrade. 'I would not, indeed, have willingly met the iron arm of Richard himself, and I shame not to confess that I rejoice to be free of his encounter. But, from his bastard brother downward, the man breathes not in his ranks whom I fear to meet.'

'It is well you are so confident,' continued the Templar; 'and in that case the fangs of yonder hound have done more to dissolve this league of princes than either thy devices or the dagger of the Charegite. Seest thou how, under a brow studiously overclouded, Philip cannot conceal the satisfaction which he feels at the prospect of release from the alliance which sat so heavy on him? Mark how Henry of Champagne smiles to himself, like a sparkling goblet of his own wine; and see the chuckling delight of Austria, who thinks his quarrel is about to be avenged, without risk or trouble of his own. Hush, he approaches. A most grievous chance, most royal Austria, that these breaches in the walls of our Zion ——'

'If thou meanest this Crusade,' replied the Duke, 'I would it were crumbled to pieces, and each were safe at home! I speak this in confidence.'

'But,' said the Marquis of Montserrat, 'to think this disunion should be made by the hands of King Richard, for whose pleasure we have been contented to endure so much, and to whom we have been as submissive as slaves to a master, in hopes that he would use his valour against our enemies, instead of exercising it upon our friends!'

'I see not that he is so much more valorous than others,' said the Archduke. 'I believe, had the noble Marquis met him in the lists, he would have had the better; for, though the islander deals heavy blows with the pole-axe, he is not so very dexterous with the lance. I should have cared little to have met him myself on our old quarrel, had the weal of Christendom permitted to sovereign princes to breathe themselves in the lists. And if thou desirest it, noble Marquis, I will myself be your godfather in this combat.'

'And I also,' said the Grand Master.

'Come, then, and take your nooning in our tent, noble sirs,' said the Duke, 'and we'll speak of this business over some right Nierenstein.'

They entered together accordingly.

'What said our patron and these great folks together?' said Jonas Schwanker to his companion, the *spruchsprecher*, who had used the freedom to press nigh to his master when the council was dismissed, while the jester waited at a more respectful distance.

'Servant of folly,' said the *spruchsprecher*, 'moderate thy curiosity; it beseems not that I should tell to thee the counsels of our master.'

'Man of wisdom, you mistake,' answered Jonas: 'we are both the constant attendants on our patron, and it concerns us alike to know whether thou or I — wisdom or folly — have the deeper interest in him.'

'He told to the Marquis,' answered the *spruchsprecher*, 'and to the Grand Master, that he was aweary of these wars, and would be glad he was safe at home.'

'That is a drawn cast, and counts for nothing in the game,' said the jester; 'it was most wise to think thus, but great folly to tell it to others. Proceed.'

'Ha, hem!' said the *spruchsprecher*; 'he next said to them, that Richard was not more valorous than others, or over-dexterous in the tilt-yard.'

'Woodcock of my side,' said Schwanker; 'this was egregious folly. What next?'

'Nay, I am something oblivious,' replied the man of wisdom; 'he invited them to a goblet of Nierenstein.'

'That hath a show of wisdom in it,' said Jonas, 'thou may'st mark it to thy credit in the meantime; but an he drink too much, as is most likely, I will have it pass to mine. Anything more?'

'Nothing worth memory,' answered the orator, 'only he wished he had taken the occasion to meet Richard in the lists.'

'Out upon it — out upon it!' said Jonas; 'this is such dotage of folly, that I am wellnigh ashamed of winning the game by it. Ne'ertheless, fool as he is, we will follow him, most sage *spruchsprecher*, and have our share of the wine of Nierenstein.'

CHAPTER XXV

Yet this inconstancy is such
As thou, too, shalt adore;
I could not love thee, love, so much
Loved I not honour more.

MONTROSE'S *Lines*.[1]

WHEN King Richard returned to his tent, he commanded the Nubian to be brought before him. He entered with his usual ceremonial reverence, and, having prostrated himself, remained standing before the King, in the attitude of a slave awaiting the orders of his master. It was perhaps well for him that the preservation of his character required his eyes to be fixed on the ground, since the keen glance with which Richard for some time surveyed him in silence would, if fully encountered, have been difficult to sustain.

'Thou canst well of woodcraft,' said the King, after a pause, 'and hast started thy game and brought him to bay as ably as if Tristrem[2] himself had taught thee. But this is not all: he must be brought down at force. I myself would have liked to have levelled my hunting-spear at him. There are, it seems, respects which prevent this. Thou art about to return to the camp of the Soldan, bearing a letter, requiring of his courtesy to appoint neutral ground for the deed of chivalry, and, should it consist with his pleasure, to concur with us in witnessing it. Now, speaking conjecturally, we think thou might'st find in that camp some cavalier who, for the love of truth and his own augmentation of honour, will do battle with this same traitor of Montserrat?'

The Nubian raised his eyes and fixed them on the King with a look of eager ardour; then raised them to Heaven with such solemn gratitude, that the water soon glistened in them; then bent his head, as affirming what Richard desired, and resumed his usual posture of submissive attention.

[1] See Note 9.

[2] See Sir Tristrem. Note 10.

'It is well,' said the King; 'and I see thy desire to oblige me in this matter. And herein, I must needs say, lies the excellence of such a servant as thou, who hast not speech either to debate our purpose or to require explanation of what we have determined. An English serving-man, in thy place, had given me his dogged advice to trust the combat with some good lance of my household, who, from my brother Longsword downwards, are all on fire to do battle in my cause; and a chattering Frenchman had made a thousand attempts to discover wherefore I look for a champion from the camp of the infidels. But thou, my silent agent, canst do mine errand without questioning or comprehending it: with thee to hear is to obey.'

A bend of the body, and a genuflection, were the appropriate answer of the Ethiopian to these observations.

'And now to another point,' said the King, and speaking suddenly and rapidly. 'Have you yet seen Edith Plantagenet?'

The mute looked up as in the act of being about to speak — nay, his lips had begun to utter a distinct negative — when the abortive attempt died away in the imperfect murmurs of the dumb.

'Why, lo you there!' said the King. 'The very sound of the name of a royal maiden, of beauty so surpassing as that of our lovely cousin, seems to have power enough wellnigh to make the dumb speak! What miracles then might her eye work upon such a subject! I will make the experiment, friend slave. Thou shalt see this choice beauty of our court, and do the errand of the princely Soldan.'

Again a joyful glance, again a genuflection; but, as he arose, the King laid his hand heavily on his shoulder, and proceeded with stern gravity thus: 'Let me in one thing warn you, my sable envoy. Even if thou shouldst feel that the kindly influence of her whom thou art soon to behold should loosen the bonds of thy tongue, presently imprisoned, as the good Soldan expresses it, within the ivory walls of its castle, beware how thou changest thy taciturn character, or speakest a word in her presence, even if thy powers of utterance were to be miraculously restored. Believe me, that I should have thy tongue extracted by the roots, and its ivory palace, that is, I presume, its range of teeth, drawn out one by one. Wherefore, be wise and silent still.'

The Nubian, so soon as the King had removed his heavy grasp from his shoulder, bent his head, and laid his hand on his lips, in token of silent obedience.

But Richard again laid his hand on him more gently, and added, 'This behest we lay on thee as on a slave. Wert thou knight and gentleman, we would require thine honour in pledge of thy silence, which is one especial condition of our present trust.'

The Ethiopian raised his body proudly, looked full at the King, and laid his right hand on his heart.

Richard then summoned his chamberlain.

'Go, Neville,' he said, 'with this slave, to the tent of our royal consort, and say it is our pleasure that he have an audience — a private audience — of our cousin Edith. He is charged with a commission to her. Thou canst show him the way also, in case he requires thy guidance, though thou may'st have observed it is wonderful how familiar he already seems to be with the purlieus of our camp. And thou, too, friend Ethiop,' the King continued, 'what thou dost, do quickly, and return hither within the half-hour.'

'I stand discovered,' thought the seeming Nubian, as, with downcast looks and folded arms, he followed the hasty stride of Neville towards the tent of Queen Berengaria — 'I stand undoubtedly discovered and unfolded to King Richard; yet I cannot perceive that his resentment is hot against me. If I understand his words, and surely it is impossible to misinterpret them, he gives me a noble chance of redeeming my honour upon the crest of this false marquis, whose guilt I read in his craven eye and quivering lip, when the charge was made against him. Roswal, faithfully hast thou served thy master, and most dearly shall thy wrong be avenged! But what is the meaning of my present permission to look upon her whom I had despaired ever to see again? And why or how can the royal Plantagenet consent that I should see his divine kinswoman, either as the messenger of the heathen Saladin or as the guilty exile whom he so lately expelled from his camp, his audacious avowal of the affection which is his pride being the greatest enhancement of his guilt? That Richard should consent to her receiving a letter from an infidel lover, [and] by the hands of one of such disproportioned rank, are either of them circumstances equally incredible, and, at the same time, inconsistent with each other. But Richard, when unmoved by his heady passions, is liberal, generous, and truly noble, and as such I will deal with him, and act according to his instructions, direct or implied, seeking to know no more than may gradually unfold itself without my officious inquiry. To him who has

given me so brave an opportunity to vindicate my tarnished honour I owe acquiescence and obedience, and, painful as it may be, the debt shall be paid. And yet' — thus the proud swelling of his heart farther suggested — 'Cœur-de-Lion, as he is called, might have measured the feelings of others by his own. I urge an address to his kinswoman! *I*, who never spoke word to her when I took a royal prize from her hand, when I was accounted not the lowest in feats of chivalry among the defenders of the Cross! *I* approach her when in a base disguise, and in a servile habit, and, alas! when my actual condition is that of a slave, with a spot of dishonour on that which was once my shield! *I* do this! He little knows me. Yet I thank him for the opportunity which may make us all better acquainted with each other.'

As he arrived at this conclusion, they paused before the entrance of the Queen's pavilion.

They were of course admitted by the guards, and Neville, leaving the Nubian in a small apartment or ante-chamber, which was but too well remembered by him, passed into that which was used as the Queen's presence-chamber. He communicated his royal master's pleasure in a low and respectful tone of voice, very different from the bluntness of Thomas de Vaux, to whom Richard was everything, and the rest of the court, including Berengaria herself, was nothing. A burst of laughter followed the communication of his errand.

'And what like is the Nubian slave, who comes ambassador on such an errand from the Soldan — a negro, De Neville, is he not?' said a female voice, easily recognised for that of Berengaria. 'A negro, is he not, De Neville, with black skin, a head curled like a ram's, a flat nose, and blubber lips — ha, worthy Sir Henry?'

'Let not your Grace forget the shin-bones,' said another voice, 'bent outwards like the edge of a Saracen scimitar.'

'Rather like the bow of a Cupid, since he comes upon a lover's errand,' said the Queen. 'Gentle Neville, thou art ever prompt to pleasure us poor women, who have so little to pass away our idle moments. We must see this messenger of love. Turks and Moors have I seen many, but negro never.'

'I am created to obey your Grace's commands, so you will bear me out with my sovereign for doing so,' answered the debonair knight. 'Yet, let me assure your Grace, you will see somewhat different from what you expect.'

'So much the better: uglier yet than our imaginations

can fancy, yet the chosen love-messenger of this gallant Soldan!'

'Gracious madam,' said the Lady Calista, 'may I implore you would permit the good knight to carry this messenger straight to the Lady Edith, to whom his credentials are addressed? We have already escaped hardly for such a frolic.'

'Escaped!' repeated the Queen, scornfully. 'Yet thou mayst be right, Calista, in thy caution; let this Nubian, as thou callest him, first do his errand to our cousin. Besides, he is mute too, is he not?'

'He is, gracious madam,' answered the knight.

'Royal sport have these Eastern ladies,' said Berengaria, 'attended by those before whom they may say anything, yet who can report nothing; whereas in our camp, as the prelate of St. Jude's is wont to say, a bird of the air will carry the matter.'

'Because,' said De Neville, 'your Grace forgets that you speak within canvas walls.'

The voices sunk on this observation, and, after a little whispering, the English knight again returned to the Ethiopian, and made him a sign to follow. He did so, and Neville conducted him to a pavilion, pitched somewhat apart from that of the Queen, for the accommodation, it seemed, of the Lady Edith and her attendants. One of her Coptic maidens received the message communicated by Sir Henry Neville, and, in the space of a very few minutes, the Nubian was ushered into Edith's presence, while Neville was left on the outside of the tent. The slave who introduced him withdrew on a signal from her mistress, and it was with humiliation, not of the posture only but of the very inmost soul, that the unfortunate knight, thus strangely disguised, threw himself on one knee, with looks bent on the ground, and arms folded on his bosom, like a criminal who expects his doom. Edith was clad in the same manner as when she received King Richard, her long transparent dark veil hanging around her like the shade of a summer night on a beautiful landscape, disguising and rendering obscure the beauties which it could not hide. She held in her hand a silver lamp, fed with some aromatic spirit, which burned with unusual brightness.

When Edith came within a step of the kneeling and motionless slave, she held the light towards his face, as if to peruse his features more attentively, then turned from him, and placed her lamp so as to throw the shadow of his face in profile upon the

curtain which hung beside. She at length spoke in a voice composed, yet deeply sorrowful.

'Is it you? Is it indeed you, brave Knight of the Leopard — gallant Sir Kenneth of Scotland — is it indeed you — thus servilely disguised — thus surrounded by an hundred dangers?'

At hearing the tones of his lady's voice thus unexpectedly addressed to him, and in a tone of compassion approaching to tenderness, a corresponding reply rushed to the knight's lips, and scarce could Richard's commands, and his own promised silence, prevent his answering, that the sight he saw, the sounds he just heard, were sufficient to recompense the slavery of a life, and dangers which threatened that life every hour. He *did* recollect himself, however, and a deep and impassioned sigh was his only reply to the high-born Edith's question.

'I see — I know I have guessed right,' continued Edith. 'I marked you from your first appearance near the platform on which I stood with the Queen. I knew, too, your valiant hound. She is no true lady, and is unworthy of the service of such a knight as thou art, from whom disguises of dress or hue could conceal a faithful servant. Speak, then, without fear, to Edith Plantagenet. She knows how to grace in adversity the good knight who served, honoured, and did deeds of arms in her name when fortune befriended him. Still silent! Is it fear or shame that keeps thee so? Fear should be unknown to thee; and for shame, let it remain with those who have wronged thee.'

The knight, in despair at being obliged to play the mute in an interview so interesting, could only express his mortification by sighing deeply, and laying his finger upon his lips. Edith stepped back as if somewhat displeased.

'What!' she said, 'the Asiatic mute in very deed, as well as in attire? This I looked not for. Or thou may'st scorn me, perhaps, for thus boldly acknowledging that I have heedfully observed the homage thou hast paid me? Hold no unworthy thoughts of Edith on that account. She knows well the bounds which reserve and modesty prescribe to high-born maidens, and she knows when and how far they should give place to gratitude — to a sincere desire that it were in her power to repay services and repair injuries arising from the devotion which a good knight bore towards her. Why fold thy hands together, and wring them with so much passion? Can it be,' she added, shrinking back at the idea, 'that their cruelty has actually deprived thee of speech? Thou shakest thy head. Be it a spell,

be it obstinacy, I question thee no farther, but leave thee to do thine errand after thine own fashion. I also can be mute.'

The disguised knight made an action as if at once lamenting his own condition and deprecating her displeasure, while at the same time he presented to her, wrapped, as usual, in fine silk and cloth of gold, the letter of the Soldan. She took it, surveyed it carelessly, then laid it aside, and bending her eyes once more on the knight, she said in a low tone, 'Not even a word to do thine errand to me?'

He pressed both his hands to his brow, as if to intimate the pain which he felt at being unable to obey her; but she turned from him in anger.

'Begone!' she said. 'I have spoken enough — too much — to one who will not waste on me a word in reply. Begone! and say, if I have wronged thee, I have done penance; for if I have been the unhappy means of dragging thee down from a station of honour, I have, in this interview, forgotten my own worth and lowered myself in thy eyes and in my own.'

She covered her eyes with her hand, and seemed deeply agitated. Sir Kenneth would have approached, but she waved him back.

'Stand off! thou whose soul Heaven hath suited to its new station! Aught less dull and fearful than a slavish mute had spoken a word of gratitude, were it but to reconcile me to my own degradation. Why pause you? Begone!'

The disguised knight almost involuntarily looked towards the letter as an apology for protracting his stay. She snatched it up, saying, in a tone of irony and contempt, 'I had forgotten — the dutiful slave waits an answer to his message. How's this — from the Soldan!'

She hastily ran over the contents, which were expressed both in Arabic and French, and when she had done, she laughed in bitter anger.

'Now this passes imagination,' she said: 'no jongleur can show so deft a transmutation. His legerdemain can transform zechins and bezants into doits and maravedies; but can his art convert a Christian knight, ever esteemed among the bravest of the Holy Crusade, into the dust-kissing slave of a heathen Soldan — the bearer of a paynim's insolent proposals to a Christian maiden — nay, forgetting the laws of honourable chivalry, as well as of religion? But it avails not talking to the willing slave of a heathen hound. Tell your master, when his scourge shall have found thee a tongue, that which thou

hast seen me do.' So saying, she threw the Soldan's letter on the ground, and placed her foot upon it. 'And say to him, that Edith Plantagenet scorns the homage of an unchristened pagan.'

With these words she was about to shoot from the knight, when, kneeling at her feet in bitter agony, he ventured to lay his hand upon her robe and oppose her departure.

'Heardst thou not what I said, dull slave?' she said, turning short round on him, and speaking with emphasis: 'tell the heathen Soldan, thy master, that I scorn his suit as much as I despise the prostration of a worthless renegade to religion and chivalry — to God and to his lady!'

So saying, she burst from him, tore her garment from his grasp, and left the tent.

The voice of Neville, at the same time, summoned him from without. Exhausted and stupified by the distress he had undergone during this interview, from which he could only have extricated himself by breach of the engagement which he had formed with King Richard, the unfortunate knight staggered rather than walked after the English baron, till they reached the royal pavilion, before which a party of horsemen had just dismounted. There was light and motion within the tent, and when Neville entered with his disguised attendant, they found the King, with several of his nobility, engaged in welcoming those who were newly arrived.

CHAPTER XXVI

The tears I shed must ever fall!
I weep not for an absent swain;
For time may happier hours recall,
And parted lovers meet again.

I weep not for the silent dead;
Their pains are past, their sorrows o'er,
And those that loved their steps must tread,
When death shall join to part no more.

But worse than absence, worse than death,
She wept her lover's sullied fame,
And, fired with all the pride of birth,
She wept a soldier's injured name.[1]

Ballad.

THE frank and bold voice of Richard was heard in joyous gratulation.

'Thomas de Vaux!—stout Tom of the Gills! by the head of King Henry, thou art welcome to me as ever was flask of wine to a jolly toper! I should scarce have known how to order my battle array, unless I had thy bulky form in mine eye as a landmark to form my ranks upon. We shall have blows anon, Thomas, if the saints be gracious to us; and had we fought in thine absence, I would have looked to hear of thy being found hanging upon an elder-tree.'

'I should have borne my disappointment with more Christian patience, I trust,' said Thomas de Vaux, 'than to have died the death of an apostate. But I thank your Grace for my welcome, which is the more generous, as it respects a banquet of blows, of which, saving your pleasure, you are ever too apt to engross the larger share; but here have I brought one to whom your Grace will, I know, give a yet warmer welcome.'

The person who now stepped forward to make obeisance to

[1] The last four lines of this ballad are by the Author himself, and the previous lines from 'The Song of Genius,' by Helen D'Arcy Cranstoun, afterwards Mrs. Dugald Stewart (*Laing*).

Richard was a young man of low stature and slight form. His dress was as modest as his figure was unimpressive; but he bore on his bonnet a gold buckle, with a gem the lustre of which could only be rivalled by the brilliancy of the eye which the bonnet shaded. It was the only striking feature in his countenance; but when once noticed, it ever made a strong impression on the spectator. About his neck there hung in a scarf of sky-blue silk a 'wrest,' as it was called — that is, the key with which a harp is tuned, and which was of solid gold.

This personage would have kneeled reverently to Richard, but the monarch raised him in joyful haste, pressed him to his bosom warmly, and kissed him on either side of the face.

'Blondel de Nesle!' he exclaimed, joyfully; 'welcome from Cyprus, my king of minstrels! — welcome to the King of England, who rates not his own dignity more highly than he does thine. I have been sick, man, and, by my soul, I believe it was for lack of thee; for, were I half-way to the gate of Heaven, methinks thy strains could call me back. And what news, my gentle master, from the land of the lyre? Anything fresh from the *trouveurs* of Provence — anything from the minstrels of merry Normandy — above all, hast thou thyself been busy? But I need not ask thee — thou canst not be idle, if thou wouldst: thy noble qualities are like a fire burning within, and compel thee to pour thyself out in music and song.'

'Something I have learned, and something I have done, noble king,' answered the celebrated Blondel, with a retiring modesty which all Richard's enthusiastic admiration of his skill had been unable to banish.

'We will hear thee, man — we will hear thee instantly,' said the King; then touching Blondel's shoulder kindly, he added, 'That is, if thou art not fatigued with thy journey; for I would sooner ride my best horse to death than injure a note of thy voice.'

'My voice is, as ever, at the service of my [illegible] patron,' said Blondel; 'but your Majesty,' he added, looking at some papers on the table, 'seems more importantly engaged, and the hour waxes late.'

'Not a whit, man — not a whit, my dearest Blondel. I did but sketch an array of battle against the Saracens — a thing of a moment, almost as soon done as the routing of them.'

'Methinks, however,' said Thomas de Vaux, 'it were not unfit to inquire what soldiers your Grace hath to array. I bring reports on that subject from Ascalon.'

'Thou art a mule, Thomas,' said the King — 'a very mule for dulness and obstinacy. Come, nobles — a hall — a hall! — range ye around him. Give Blondel the tabouret. Where is his harp-bearer? or, soft — lend him my harp, his own may be damaged by the journey.'

'I would your Grace would take my report,' said Thomas de Vaux. 'I have ridden far, and have more list to my bed than to have my ears tickled.'

'*Thy* ears tickled!' said the King; 'that must be with a woodcock's feather, and not with sweet sounds. Hark thee, Thomas, do thine ears know the singing of Blondel from the braying of an ass?'

'In faith, my liege,' replied Thomas, 'I cannot well say; but, setting Blondel out of the question, who is a born gentleman, and doubtless of high acquirements, I shall never, for the sake of your Grace's question, look on a minstrel but I shall think upon an ass.'

'And might not your manners,' said Richard, 'have excepted me, who am a gentleman born as well as Blondel, and, like him, a guild-brother of the *joyeuse science*?'

'Your Grace should remember,' said De Vaux, smiling, 'that 't is useless asking for manners from a mule.'

'Most truly spoken,' said the King; 'and an ill-conditioned animal thou art. But come hither, master mule, and be unloaded, that thou mayst get thee to thy litter, without any music being wasted on thee. Meantime, do thou, good brother of Salisbury, go to our consort's tent, and tell her that Blondel has arrived, with his budget fraught with the newest minstrelsy. Bid her come hither instantly, and do thou escort her, and see that our cousin, Edith Plantagenet, remain not behind.'

His eye then rested for a moment on the Nubian, with that expression of doubtful meaning which his countenance usually displayed when he looked at him.

'Ha, our silent and secret messenger returned? Stand up, slave, behind the back of De Neville, and thou shalt hear presently sounds which will make thee bless God that He afflicted thee rather with dumbness than deafness.'

So saying, he turned from the rest of the company towards De Vaux, and plunged instantly into the military details which that baron laid before him.

About the time that the Lord of Gilsland had finished his audience, a messenger announced that the Queen and her attendants were approaching the royal tent. 'A flask of wine,

ho!' said the King — 'of old King Isaac's long-saved Cyprus, which we won when we stormed Famagosta; fill to the stout Lord of Gilsland, gentles — a more careful and faithful servant never had any prince.'

'I am glad,' said Thomas de Vaux, 'that your Grace finds the mule a useful slave, though his voice be less musical than horse-hair or wire.'

'What, thou canst not yet digest that quip of the mule?' said Richard. 'Wash it down with a brimming flagon, man, or thou wilt choke upon it. Why, so — well pulled! And now I will tell thee, thou art a soldier as well as I, and we must brook each other's jests in the hall, as each other's blows in the tourney, and love each other the harder we hit. By my faith, if thou didst not hit me as hard as I did thee in our late encounter, thou gavest all thy wit to the thrust. But here lies the difference betwixt thee and Blondel. Thou art but my comrade — I might say my pupil — in the art of war; Blondel is my master in the science of minstrelsy and music. To thee I permit the freedom of intimacy; to him I must do reverence, as to my superior in his art. Come, man, be not peevish, but remain and hear our glee.'

'To see your Majesty in such cheerful mood,' said the Lord of Gilsland, 'by my faith, I could remain till Blondel had achieved the great romance of King Arthur, which lasts for three days.'

'We will not tax your patience so deeply,' said the King. 'But see, yonder glare of torches without shows that our consort approaches. Away to receive her, man, and win thyself grace in the brightest eyes of Christendom. Nay, never stop to adjust thy cloak. See, thou hast let Neville come between the wind and the sails of thy galley!'

'He was never before me in the field of battle,' said De Vaux, not greatly pleased to see himself anticipated by the more active service of the chamberlain.

'No, neither he nor any one went before thee there, my good Tom of the Gills,' said the King, 'unless it was ourself, now and then.'

'Ay, my liege,' said De Vaux, 'and let us do justice to the unfortunate: the unhappy Knight of the Leopard hath been before me, too, at a season; for, look you, he weighs less on horseback, and so ——'

'Hush!' said the King, interrupting him in a peremptory tone, 'not a word of him!' and instantly stepped forward to

greet his royal consort; and when he had done so, he presented to her Blondel, as king of minstrelsy, and his master in the gay science. Berengaria, who well knew that her royal husband's passion for poetry and music almost equalled his appetite for warlike fame, and that Blondel was his especial favourite, took anxious care to receive him with all the flattering distinctions due to one whom the king delighted to honour. Yet it was evident that, though Blondel made suitable returns to the compliments showered on him something too abundantly by the royal beauty, he owned with deeper reverence and more humble gratitude the simple and graceful welcome of Edith, whose kindly greeting appeared to him, perhaps, sincere in proportion to its brevity and simplicity.

Both the Queen and her royal husband were aware of this distinction, and Richard, seeing his consort somewhat piqued at the preference assigned to his cousin, by which perhaps he himself did not feel much gratified, said in the hearing of both, 'We minstrels, Berengaria, as thou mayst see by the bearing of our master Blondel, pay more reverence to a severe judge like our kinswoman than to a kindly, partial friend like thyself, who is willing to take our worth upon trust.'

Edith was moved by this sarcasm of her royal kinsman, and hesitated not to reply, that, 'To be a harsh and severe judge was not an attribute proper to her alone of all the Plantagenets.'

She had perhaps said more, having some touch of the temper of that house, which, deriving their name and cognizance from the lowly broom (*Planta Genista*), assumed as an emblem of humility, were perhaps one of the proudest families that ever ruled in England; but her eye, when kindling in her reply, suddenly caught those of the Nubian, although he endeavoured to conceal himself behind the nobles who were present, and she sunk upon a seat, turning so pale that the Queen Berengaria deemed herself obliged to call for water and essences, and to go through the other ceremonies appropriate to a lady's swoon. Richard, who better estimated Edith's strength of mind, called to Blondel to assume his seat and commence his lay, declaring that minstrelsy was worth every other recipe to recall a Plantagenet to life. 'Sing us,' he said, 'that song of the Bloody Vest, of which thou didst formerly give me the argument, ere I left Cyprus; thou must be perfect in it by this time, or, as our yeomen say, thy bow is broken.'

The anxious eye of the minstrel, however, dwelt on Edith,

BLONDEL'S VOICE THRILLED ON EVERY EAR.

and it was not till he observed her returning colour that he obeyed the repeated commands of the King. Then, accompanying his voice with the harp, so as to grace, but yet not drown, the sense of what he sung, he chanted in a sort of recitative one of those ancient adventures of love and knighthood which were wont of yore to win the public attention. So soon as he began to prelude, the insignificance of his personal appearance seemed to disappear, and his countenance glowed with energy and inspiration. His full, manly, mellow voice, so absolutely under command of the purest taste, thrilled on every ear and to every heart. Richard, rejoiced as after victory, called out the appropriate summons for silence,

'Listen, lords, in bower and hall';

while, with the zeal of a patron at once and a pupil, he arranged the circle around, and hushed them into silence, and he himself sat down with an air of expectation and interest, not altogether unmixed with the gravity of the professed critic. The courtiers turned their eyes on the King, that they might be ready to trace and imitate the emotions his features should express, and Thomas de Vaux yawned tremendously, as one who submitted unwillingly to a wearisome penance. The song of Blondel was of course in the Norman language; but the verses which follow express its meaning and its manner.

THE BLOODY VEST

'T was near the fair city of Benevent,
When the sun was setting on bough and bent,
And knights were preparing in bower and tent,
On the eve of the Baptist's tournament;
When in Lincoln green a stripling gent,
Well seeming a page by a princess sent,
Wander'd the camp, and, still as he went,
Enquired for the Englishman, Thomas a Kent.

Far hath he fared, and farther must fare,
Till he finds his pavilion nor stately nor rare —
Little save iron and steel was there;
And, as lacking the coin to pay armourer's care,
With his sinewy arms to the shoulders bare,
The good knight with hammer and file did repair
The mail that to-morrow must see him wear,
For the honour of St. John and his lady fair.

'Thus speaks my lady,' the page said he,
And the knight bent lowly both head and knee,
'She is Benevent's princess so high in degree,
And thou art as lowly as knight may well be;

He that would climb so lofty a tree,
Or spring such a gulf as divides her from thee,
Must dare some high deed, by which all men may see
His ambition is back'd by his hie chivalrie.

'Therefore thus speaks my lady,' the fair page he said,
And the knight lowly louted with hand and with head,
'Fling aside the good armour in which thou art clad,
And don thou this weed of her night-gear instead,
For a hauberk of steel, a kirtle of thread;
An charge, thus attired, in the tournament dread,
And fight as thy wont is where most blood is shed,
And bring honour away, or remain with the dead.'

Untroubled in his look and untroubled in his breast,
The knight the weed hath taken and reverently hath kissed —
'Now blessed be the moment, the messenger be blest!
Much honour'd do I hold me in my lady's high behest;
And say unto my lady, in this dear night-weed dress'd,
To the best-armed champion I will not veil my crest.
But if I live and bear me well 't is her turn to take the test.'
Here, gentles, ends the foremost fytte of the Lay of the Bloody Vest.

'Thou hast changed the measure upon us unawares in that last couplet, my Blondel!' said the King.

'Most true, my lord,' said Blondel. 'I rendered the verses from the Italian of an old harper whom I met in Cyprus, and not having had time either to translate it accurately or commit it to memory, I am fain to supply gaps in the music and the verse as I can upon the spur of the moment, as you see boors mend a quickset fence with a fagot.'

'Nay, on my faith,' said the King, 'I like these rattling rolling Alexandrines: methinks they come more twangingly off to the music than that briefer measure.'

'Both are licensed, as is well known to your Grace,' answered Blondel.

'They are so, Blondel,' said Richard; 'yet methinks the scene, where there is like to be fighting, will go best on in these same thundering Alexandrines, which sound like the charge of cavalry; while the other measure is but like the sidelong amble of a lady's palfrey.'

'It shall be as your Grace pleases,' replied Blondel, and began again to prelude.

'Nay, first cherish thy fancy with a cup of fiery Chios wine,' said the King; 'and hark thee, I would have thee fling away that newfangled restriction of thine, of terminating in accurate and similar rhymes. They are a constraint on thy flow of fancy, and make thee resemble a man dancing in fetters.'

'The fetters are easily flung off, at least,' said Blondel, again sweeping his fingers over the strings, as one who would rather have played than listened to criticism.

'But why put them on, man?' continued the King. 'Wherefore thrust thy genius into iron bracelets? I marvel how you got forward at all: I am sure I should not have been able to compose a stanza in yonder hampered measure.'

Blondel looked down and busied himself with the strings of his harp, to hide an involuntary smile which crept over his features; but it escaped not Richard's observation.

'By my faith, thou laugh'st at me, Blondel,' he said; 'and, in good truth, every man deserves it who presumes to play the master when he should be the pupil; but we kings get bad habits of self-opinion. Come, on with thy lay, dearest Blondel—on after thine own fashion, better than aught that we can suggest, though we must needs be talking.'

Blondel resumed the lay; but, as extemporaneous composition was familiar to him, he failed not to comply with the King's hints, and was perhaps not displeased to show with how much ease he could new-model a poem even while in the act of recitation.

THE BLOODY VEST

Fytte Second

The Baptist's fair morrow beheld gallant feats:
There was winning of honour and losing of seats,
There was hewing with falchions and splintering of staves;
The victors won glory, the vanquished won graves.
O, many a knight there fought bravely and well,
Yet one was accounted his peers to excel,
And 't was he whose sole armour on body and breast
Seem'd the weed of a damsel when bound for her rest.

There were some dealt him wounds that were bloody and sore,
But others respected his plight, and forbore.
'It is some oath of honour,' they said, 'and I trow,
'Twere unknightly to slay him achieving his vow.'
Then the prince, for his sake, bade the tournament cease:
He flung down his warder, the trumpets sung peace;
And the judges declare, and competitors yield,
That the Knight of the Night-gear was first in the field.

The feast it was nigh, and the mass it was nigher,
When before the fair princess low louted a squire,
And deliver'd a garment unseemly to view,
With sword-cut and spear-thrust all hack'd and pierced through,

All rent and all tatter'd, all clotted with blood,
With foam of the horses, with dust, and with mud.
Not the point of that lady's small finger, I ween,
Could have rested on spot was unsullied and clean.

'This token my master, Sir Thomas a Kent,
Restores to the princess of fair Benevent.
He that climbs the tall tree has won right to the fruit,
He that leaps the wide gulf should prevail in his suit:
Through life's utmost peril the prize I have won,
And now must the faith of my mistress be shown;
For she who prompts knights on such danger to run
Must avouch his true service in front of the sun.

'"I restore," says my master, "the garment I 've worn,
And I claim of the princess to don it in turn;
For its stains and its rents she should prize it the more,
Since by shame 't is unsullied, though crimson'd with gore."
Then deep blush'd the princess; yet kiss'd she and press'd
The blood-spotted robes to her lips and her breast.
'Go tell my true knight, church and chamber shall show,
If I value the blood on this garment or no.'

And when it was time for the nobles to pass,
In solemn procession to minster and mass,
The first walk'd the princess in purple and pall,
But the blood-besmear'd night-robe she wore over all;
And eke, in the hall, where they all sat at dine,
When she knelt to her father and proffered the wine,
Over all her rich robes and state jewels she wore
That wimple unseemly, bedabbled with gore.

Then lords whisper'd ladies, as well you may think,
And ladies replied, with nod, titter, and wink;
And the prince, who in anger and shame had look'd down,
Turn'd at length to his daughter, and spoke with a frown:
'Now since thou hast publish'd thy folly and guilt,
E'en atone with thy hand for the blood thou hast spilt;
Yet sore for your boldness you both will repent,
When you wander as exiles from fair Benevent.'

Then out spoke stout Thomas, in hall where he stood,
Exhausted and feeble, but dauntless of mood,
'The blood that I lost for this daughter of thine,
I pour'd forth as freely as flask gives its wine;
And if for my sake she brooks penance and blame,
Do not doubt I will save her from suffering and shame;
And light will she reck of thy princedom and rent,
When I hail her, in England, the Countess of Kent!'

A murmur of applause ran through the assembly, following the example of Richard himself, who loaded with praises his favourite minstrel, and ended by presenting him with a ring of considerable value. The Queen hastened to distinguish the

favourite by a rich bracelet, and many of the nobles who were present followed the royal example.

'Is our cousin Edith,' said the King, 'become insensible to the sound of the harp she once loved?'

'She thanks Blondel for his lay,' replied Edith, 'but doubly the kindness of the kinsman who suggested it.'

'Thou art angry, cousin,' said the King — 'angry because thou hast heard of a woman more wayward than thyself. But you escape me not: I will walk a space homeward with you towards the Queen's pavilion; we must have conference together ere the night has waned into morning.'

The Queen and her attendants were now on foot, and the other guests withdrew from the royal tent. A train with blazing torches, and an escort of archers, awaited Berengaria without the pavilion, and she was soon on her way homeward. Richard, as he had proposed, walked beside his kinswoman, and compelled her to accept of his arm as her support, so that they could speak to each other without being overheard.

'What answer, then, am I to return to the noble Soldan?' said Richard. 'The kings and princes are falling from me, Edith: this new quarrel hath alienated them once more. I would do something for the Holy Sepulchre by composition, if not by victory; and the chance of my doing this depends, alas! on the caprice of a woman. I would lay my single spear in the rest against ten of the best lances in Christendom, rather than argue with a wilful wench, who knows not what is for her own good. What answer, coz, am I to return to the Soldan? It must be decisive.'

'Tell him,' said Edith, 'that the poorest of the Plantagenets will rather wed with misery than with misbelief.'

'Shall I say with *slavery*, Edith?' said the King. 'Methinks that is nearer thy thoughts.'

'There is no room,' said Edith, 'for the suspicion you so grossly insinuate. Slavery of the body might have been pitied, but that of the soul is only to be despised. Shame to thee, king of Merry England! Thou hast enthralled both the limbs and the spirit of a knight once scarce less famed than thyself.'

'Should I not prevent my kinswoman from drinking poison, by sullying the vessel which contained it, if I saw no other means of disgusting her with the fatal liquor?' replied the King.

'It is thyself,' answered Edith, 'that would press me to drink poison, because it is proffered in a golden chalice.'

'Edith,' said Richard, 'I cannot force thy resolution; but beware you shut not the door which Heaven opens. The hermit of Engaddi, he whom Popes and councils have regarded as a prophet, hath read in the stars that thy marriage shall reconcile me with a powerful enemy, and that thy husband shall be Christian, leaving thus the fairest ground to hope that the conversion of the Soldan, and the bringing in of the sons of Ishmael to the pale of the church, will be the consequence of thy wedding with Saladin. Come, thou must make some sacrifice rather than mar such happy prospects.'

'Men may sacrifice rams and goats,' said Edith, 'but not honour and conscience. I have heard that it was the dishonour of a Christian maiden which brought the Saracens into Spain; the shame of another is no likely mode of expelling them from Palestine.'

'Dost thou call it shame to become an empress?' said the King.

'I call it shame and dishonour to profane a Christian sacrament by entering into it with an infidel whom it cannot bind; and I call it foul dishonour that I, the descendant of a Christian princess, should become of free-will the head of a haram of heathen concubines.'

'Well, kinswoman,' said the King, after a pause, 'I must not quarrel with thee, though I think thy dependent condition might have dictated more compliance.'

'My liege,' replied Edith, 'your Grace hath worthily succeeded to all the wealth, dignity, and dominion of the house of Plantagenet; do not, therefore, begrudge your poor kinswoman some small share of their pride.'

'By my faith, wench,' said the King, 'thou hast unhorsed me with that very word; so we will kiss and be friends. I will presently despatch thy answer to Saladin. But, after all, coz, were it not better to suspend your answer till you have seen him? Men say he is pre-eminently handsome.'

'There is no chance of our meeting, my lord,' said Edith.

'By St. George, but there is next to a certainty of it,' said the King; 'for Saladin will doubtless afford us a free field for the doing of this new "battle of the standard," and will witness it himself. Berengaria is wild to behold it also, and I dare be sworn not a feather of you, her companions and attendants, will remain behind — least of all thou thyself, fair coz. But come, we have reached the pavilion, and must part, not in unkindness though — nay, thou must seal it with thy lip as

well as thy hand, sweet Edith; it is my right as a sovereign to kiss my pretty vassals.'

He embraced her respectfully and affectionately, and returned through the moonlight camp, humming to himself such snatches of Blondel's lay as he could recollect.

On his arrival, he lost no time in making up his despatches for Saladin, and delivered them to the Nubian, with a charge to set out by peep of day on his return to the Soldan.

CHAPTER XXVII

We heard the tecbir, — so these Arabs call
Their shout of onset, when, with loud acclaim,
They challenge Heaven to give them victory.
Siege of Damascus.

ON the subsequent morning, Richard was invited to a conference by Philip of France, in which the latter, with many expressions of his high esteem for his brother of England, communicated to him, in terms extremely courteous, but too explicit to be misunderstood, his positive intention to return to Europe, and to the cares of his kingdom, as entirely despairing of future success in their undertaking, with their diminished forces and civil discords. Richard remonstrated, but in vain; and when the conference ended, he received without surprise a manifesto from the Duke of Austria and several other princes, announcing a resolution similar to that of Philip, and in no modified terms assigning for their defection from the cause of the Cross the inordinate ambition and arbitrary domination of Richard of England. All hopes of continuing the war with any prospect of ultimate success were now abandoned, and Richard, while he shed bitter tears over his disappointed hopes of glory, was little consoled by the recollection that the failure was in some degree to be imputed to the advantages which he had given his enemies by his own hasty and imprudent temper.

'They had not dared to have deserted my father thus,' he said to De Vaux, in the bitterness of his resentment. 'No slanders they could have uttered against so wise a king would have been believed in Christendom; whereas — fool that I am! — I have not only afforded them a pretext for deserting me, but even a colour for casting all the blame of the rupture upon my unhappy foibles.'

These thoughts were so deeply galling to the King, that De Vaux was rejoiced when the arrival of an ambassador from Saladin turned his reflections into a different channel.

This new envoy was an emir much respected by the Soldan, whose name was Abdallah el Hadgi. He derived his descent from the family of the Prophet, and the race or tribe of Hashem, in witness of which genealogy he wore a green turban of large dimensions. He had also three times performed the journey to Mecca, from which he derived his epithet of El Hadgi, or the Pilgrim. Notwithstanding these various pretensions to sanctity, Abdallah was, for an Arab, a boon companion, who enjoyed a merry tale, and laid aside his gravity so far as to quaff a blythe flagon, when secrecy ensured him against scandal. He was likewise a statesman, whose abilities had been used by Saladin in various negotiations with the Christian princes, and particularly with Richard, to whom El Hadgi was personally known and acceptable. Animated by the cheerful acquiescence with which the envoy of Saladin afforded a fair field for the combat, a safe-conduct for all who might choose to witness it, and offered his own person as a guarantee of his fidelity, Richard soon forgot his disappointed hopes, and the approaching dissolution of the Christian league, in the interesting discussions preceding a combat in the lists.

The station called the Diamond of the Desert was assigned for the place of conflict, as being nearly at an equal distance betwixt the Christian and Saracen camps. It was agreed that Conrade of Montserrat, the defendant, with his godfathers, the Archduke of Austria and the Grand Master of the Templars, should appear there on the day fixed for the combat, with an hundred armed followers, and no more; that Richard of England and his brother Salisbury, who supported the accusation, should attend with the same number, to protect his champion; and that the Soldan should bring with him a guard of five hundred chosen followers, a band considered as not more than equal to the two hundred Christian lances. Such persons of consideration as either party chose to invite to witness the contest were to wear no other weapons than their swords, and to come without defensive armour. The Soldan undertook the preparation of the lists, and to provide accommodations and refreshments of every kind for all who were to assist at the solemnity; and his letters expressed, with much courtesy, the pleasure which he anticipated in the prospect of a personal and peaceful meeting with the Melech Ric, and his anxious desire to render his reception as agreeable as possible.

All preliminaries being arranged, and communicated to the defendant and his godfathers, Abdallah the Hadgi was admitted

to a more private interview, where he heard with delight the strains of Blondel. Having first carefully put his green turban out of sight, and assumed a Greek cap in its stead, he requited the Norman minstrel's music with a drinking-song from the Persian, and quaffed a hearty flagon of Cyprus wine, to show that his practice matched his principles. On the next day, grave and sober as the water-drinker Mirglip, he bent his brow to the ground before Saladin's footstool, and rendered to the Soldan an account of his embassy.

On the day before that appointed for the combat, Conrade and his friends set off by daybreak to repair to the place assigned, and Richard left the camp at the same hour, and for the same purpose; but, as had been agreed upon, he took his journey by a different route — a precaution which had been judged necessary, to prevent the possibility of a quarrel betwixt their armed attendants.

The good King himself was in no humour for quarrelling with any one. Nothing could have added to his pleasurable anticipations of a desperate and bloody combat in the lists, except his being in his own royal person one of the combatants; and he was half in charity again even with Conrade of Montserrat. Lightly armed, richly dressed, and gay as a bridegroom on the eve of his nuptials, Richard caracoled along by the side of Queen Berengaria's litter, pointing out to her the various scenes through which they passed, and cheering with tale and song the bosom of the inhospitable wilderness. The former route of the Queen's pilgrimage to Engaddi had been on the other side of the chain of mountains, so that the ladies were strangers to the scenery of the desert; and though Berengaria knew her husband's disposition too well not to endeavour to seem interested in what he was pleased either to say or to sing, she could not help indulging some female fears when she found herself in the howling wilderness with so small an escort, which seemed almost like a moving speck on the bosom of the plain, and knew, at the same time, they were not so distant from the camp of Saladin but what they might be in a moment surprised and swept off by an overpowering host of his fiery-footed cavalry, should the pagan be faithless enough to embrace an opportunity thus tempting. But when she hinted these suspicions to Richard, he repelled them with displeasure and disdain. 'It were worse than ingratitude,' he said, 'to doubt the good faith of the generous Soldan.'

Yet the same doubts and fears recurred more than once, not

to the timid mind of the Queen alone, but to the firmer and more candid soul of Edith Plantagenet, who had no such confidence in the faith of the Moslem as to render her perfectly at ease when so much in their power; and her surprise had been far less than her terror if the desert around had suddenly resounded with the shout of 'Alla hu!' and a band of Arab cavalry had pounced on them like vultures on their prey. Nor were these suspicions lessened when, as evening approached, they were aware of a single Arab horseman, distinguished by his turban and long lance, hovering on the edge of a small eminence like a hawk poised in the air, and who instantly, on the appearance of the royal retinue, darted off with the speed of the same bird when it shoots down the wind and disappears from the horizon.

'We must be near the station,' said King Richard; 'and yonder cavalier is one of Saladin's outposts; methinks I hear the noise of the Moorish horns and cymbals. Get you into order, my hearts, and form yourselves around the ladies soldier-like and firmly.'

As he spoke, each knight, squire, and archer hastily closed in upon his appointed ground, and they proceeded in the most compact order, which made their numbers appear still smaller; and, to say the truth, though there might be no fear, there was anxiety as well as curiosity, in the attention with which they listened to the wild bursts of Moorish music, which came ever and anon more distinctly from the quarter in which the Arab horseman had been seen to disappear.

De Vaux spoke in a whisper to the King — 'Were it not well, my liege, to send a page to the top of that sandbank? Or would it stand with your pleasure that I prick forward? Methinks, by all yonder clash and clang, if there be no more than five hundred men beyond the sand-hills, half of the Soldan's retinue must be drummers and cymbal-tossers. Shall I spur on?'

The baron had checked his horse with the bit, and was just about to strike him with the spurs, when the King exclaimed — 'Not for the world. Such a caution would express suspicion, and could do little to prevent surprise, which, however, I apprehend not.'

They advanced accordingly in close and firm order till they surmounted the line of low sand-hills, and came in sight of the appointed station, when a splendid, but at the same time a startling, spectacle awaited them.

The Diamond of the Desert, so lately a solitary fountain, distinguished only amid the waste by solitary groups of palm-trees, was now the centre of an encampment, the embroidered flags and gilded ornaments of which glittered far and wide, and reflected a thousand rich tints against the setting sun. The coverings of the large pavilions were of the gayest colours — scarlet, bright yellow, pale blue, and other gaudy and gleaming hues — and the tops of their pillars, or tent-poles, were decorated with golden pomegranates and small silken flags. But, besides these distinguished pavilions, there were what Thomas de Vaux considered as a portentous number of the ordinary black tents of the Arabs, being sufficient, as he conceived, to accommodate, according to the Eastern fashion, a host of five thousand men. A number of Arabs and Kurds, fully corresponding to the extent of the encampment, were hastily assembling, each leading his horse in his hand, and their muster was accompanied by an astonishing clamour of their noisy instruments of martial music, by which, in all ages, the warfare of the Arabs has been animated.

They soon formed a deep and confused mass of dismounted cavalry in front of their encampment, when, at the signal of a shrill cry, which arose high over the clangour of the music, each cavalier sprung to his saddle. A cloud of dust, arising at the moment of this manœuvre, hid from Richard and his attendants the camp, the palm-trees, and the distant ridge of mountains, as well as the troops whose sudden movement had raised the cloud, and, ascending high over their heads, formed itself into the fantastic forms of writhed pillars, domes, and minarets. Another shrill yell was heard from the bosom of this cloudy tabernacle. It was the signal for the cavalry to advance, which they did at full gallop, disposing themselves as they came forward, so as to come in at once on the front, flanks, and rear of Richard's little body-guard, who were thus surrounded, and almost choked, by the dense clouds of dust enveloping them on each side, through which were seen alternately, and lost, the grim forms and wild faces of the Saracens, brandishing and tossing their lances in every possible direction, with the wildest cries and halloos, and frequently only reining up their horses when within a spear's length of the Christians, while those in the rear discharged over the heads of both parties thick volleys of arrows. One of these struck the litter in which the Queen was seated, who loudly screamed, and the red spot was on Richard's brow in an instant.

'Ha! St. George,' he exclaimed, 'we must take some order with this infidel scum!'

But Edith, whose litter was near, thrust her head out, and with her hand holding one of the shafts, exclaimed, 'Royal Richard, beware what you do: see, these arrows are headless.'

'Noble, sensible wench!' exclaimed Richard; 'by Heaven, thou shamest us all by thy readiness of thought and eye. Be not moved, my English hearts,' he exclaimed to his followers: 'their arrows have no heads, and their spears, too, lack the steel points. It is but a wild welcome, after their savage fashion, though doubtless they would rejoice to see us daunted or disturbed. Move onward, slow and steady.'

The little phalanx moved forward accordingly, accompanied on all sides by the Arabs, with the shrillest and most piercing cries, the bowmen, meanwhile, displaying their agility by shooting as near the crests of the Christians as was possible, without actually hitting them, while the lancers charged each other with such rude blows of their blunt weapons, that more than one of them lost his saddle, and wellnigh his life, in this rough sport. All this, though designed to express welcome, had rather a doubtful appearance in the eyes of the Europeans.

As they had advanced nearly half-way towards the camp, King Richard and his suite forming, as it were, the nucleus round which this tumultuary body of horsemen howled, whooped, skirmished, and galloped, creating a scene of indescribable confusion, another shrill cry was heard, on which all these irregulars, who were on the front and upon the flanks of the little body of Europeans, wheeled off, and forming themselves into a long and deep column, followed with comparative order and silence in the rear of Richard's troop. The dust began now to dissipate in their front, when there advanced to meet them, through that cloudy veil, a body of cavalry of a different and more regular description, completely armed with offensive and defensive weapons, and who might well have served as a body-guard to the proudest of Eastern monarchs. This splendid troop consisted of five hundred men, and each horse which it contained was worth an earl's ransom. The riders were Georgian and Circassian slaves in the very prime of life; their helmets and hauberks were formed of steel rings, so bright that they shone like silver; their vestures were of the gayest colours, and some of cloth of gold or silver; the sashes were twisted with silk and gold; their rich turbans were plumed and jewelled; and their

sabres and poniards, of Damascene steel, were adorned with gold and gems on hilt and scabbard.

This splendid array advanced to the sound of military music, and when they met the Christian body, they opened their files to the right and left, and let them enter between their ranks. Richard now assumed the foremost place in his troop, aware that Saladin himself was approaching. Nor was it long when, in the centre of his body-guard, surrounded by his domestic officers, and those hideous negroes who guard the Eastern haram, and whose misshapen forms were rendered yet more frightful by the richness of their attire, came the Soldan, with the look and manners of one on whose brow nature had written, 'This is a king!' In his snow-white turban, vest, and wide Eastern trowsers, wearing a sash of scarlet silk, without any other ornament, Saladin might have seemed the plainest-dressed man in his own guard. But closer inspection discerned in his turban that inestimable gem which was called by the poets the Sea of Light; the diamond on which his signet was engraved, and which he wore in a ring, was probably worth all the jewels of the English crown; and a sapphire, which terminated the hilt of his canjiar, was not of much inferior value. It should be added, that to protect him from the dust, which, in the vicinity of the Dead Sea, resembles the finest ashes, or, perhaps, out of Oriental pride, the Soldan wore a sort of veil attached to his turban, which partly obscured the view of his noble features. He rode a milk-white Arabian, which bore him as if conscious and proud of his noble burden.

There was no need of farther introduction. The two heroic monarchs, for such they both were, threw themselves at once from horseback, and the troops halting and the music suddenly ceasing, they advanced to meet each other in profound silence, and, after a courteous inclination on either side, they embraced as brethren and equals. The pomp and display upon both sides attracted no farther notice: no one saw aught save Richard and Saladin, and they too beheld nothing but each other. The looks with which Richard surveyed Saladin were, however, more intently curious than those which the Soldan fixed upon him; and the Soldan also was the first to break silence.

'The Melech Ric is welcome to Saladin as water to this desert. I trust he hath no distrust of this numerous array? Excepting the armed slaves of my household, those who surround

you with eyes of wonder and of welcome are, even the humblest of them, the privileged nobles of my thousand tribes; for who that could claim a title to be present would remain at home when such a prince was to be seen as Richard, with the terrors of whose name, even on the sands of Yemen, the nurse stills her child and the free Arab subdues his restive steed?'

'And these are all nobles of Araby?' said Richard, looking around on wild forms with their persons covered with haiks, their countenance swart with the sunbeams, their teeth as white as ivory, their black eyes glancing with fierce and preternatural lustre from under the shade of their turbans, and their dress being in general simple, even to meanness.

'They claim such rank,' said Saladin; 'but, though numerous, they are within the conditions of the treaty, and bear no arms but the sabre; even the iron of their lances is left behind.'

'I fear,' muttered De Vaux in English, 'they have left them where they can be soon found. A most flourishing House of Peers, I confess, and would find Westminster Hall something too narrow for them.'

'Hush, De Vaux,' said Richard, 'I command thee. Noble Saladin,' he said, 'suspicion and thou cannot exist on the same ground. Seest thou,' pointing to the litters — 'I too have brought some champions with me, though armed, perhaps, in breach of agreement, for bright eyes and fair features are weapons which cannot be left behind.'

The Soldan, turning to the litters, made an obeisance as lowly as if looking towards Mecca, and kissed the sand in token of respect.

'Nay,' said Richard, 'they will not fear a closer encounter, brother; wilt thou not ride towards their litters, and the curtains will be presently withdrawn.'

'That may Allah prohibit!' said Saladin, 'since not an Arab looks on who would not think it shame to the noble ladies to be seen with their faces uncovered.'

'Thou shalt see them, then, in private, my royal brother,' answered Richard.

'To what purpose?' answered Saladin, mournfully. 'Thy last letter was, to the hopes which I had entertained, like water to fire; and wherefore should I again light a flame which may indeed consume, but cannot cheer, me? But will not my brother pass to the tent which his servant hath prepared for him? My principal black slave hath taken order for the reception of the princesses; the officers of my household

will attend your followers; and ourself will be the chamberlain of the royal Richard.'

He led the way accordingly to a splendid pavilion, where was everything that royal luxury could devise. De Vaux, who was in attendance, then removed the chappe (*capa*) or long riding-cloak which Richard wore, and he stood before Saladin in the close dress which showed to advantage the strength and symmetry of his person, while it bore a strong contrast to the flowing robes which disguised the thin frame of the Eastern monarch. It was Richard's two-handed sword that chiefly attracted the attention of the Saracen — a broad straight blade, the seemingly unwieldy length of which extended wellnigh from the shoulder to the heel of the wearer.

'Had I not,' said Saladin, 'seen this brand flaming in the front of battle, like that of Azrael, I had scarce believed that human arm could wield it. Might I request to see the Melech Ric strike one blow with it in peace, and in pure trial of strength?'

'Willingly, noble Saladin,' answered Richard; and looking around for something whereon to exercise his strength, he saw a steel mace, held by one of the attendants, the handle being of the same metal, and about an inch and a half in diameter. This he placed on a block of wood.

The anxiety of De Vaux for his master's honour led him to whisper in English, 'For the blessed Virgin's sake, beware what you attempt, my liege! Your full strength is not as yet returned; give no triumph to the infidel.'

'Peace, fool!' said Richard, standing firm on his ground, and casting a fierce glance around; 'thinkest thou that I can fail in *his* presence?'

The glittering broadsword, wielded by both his hands, rose aloft to the King's left shoulder, circled round his head, descended with the sway of some terrific engine, and the bar of iron rolled on the ground in two pieces, as a woodsman would sever a sapling with a hedging-bill.

'By the head of the Prophet, a most wonderful blow!' said the Soldan, critically and accurately examining the iron bar which had been cut asunder; and the blade of the sword was so well tempered as to exhibit not the least token of having suffered by the feat it had performed. He then took the King's hand, and looking on the size and muscular strength which it exhibited, laughed as he placed it beside his own, so lank and thin, so inferior in brawn and sinew.

'Ay, look well,' said De Vaux, in English, 'it will be long ere your long jackanape's fingers do such a feat with your fine gilded reaping-hook there.'

'Silence, De Vaux,' said Richard; 'by Our Lady, he understands or guesses thy meaning — be not so broad, I pray thee.'

The Soldan, indeed, presently said — 'Something I would fain attempt, though wherefore should the weak show their inferiority in presence of the strong? Yet, each land hath its own exercises, and this may be new to the Melech Ric.' So saying, he took from the floor a cushion of silk and down, and placed it upright on one end. 'Can thy weapon, my brother, sever that cushion?' he said to King Richard.

'No, surely,' replied the King; 'no sword on earth, were it the Excalibar of King Arthur, can cut that which opposes no steady resistance to the blow.'

'Mark, then,' said Saladin; and, tucking up the sleeve of his gown, showed his arm, thin indeed and spare, but which constant exercise had hardened into a mass consisting of nought but bone, brawn, and sinew. He unsheathed his scimitar, a curved and narrow blade, which glittered not like the swords of the Franks, but was, on the contrary, of a dull blue colour, marked with ten millions of meandering lines, which showed how anxiously the metal had been welded by the armourer. Wielding this weapon, apparently so inefficient when compared to that of Richard, the Soldan stood resting his weight upon his left foot, which was slightly advanced; he balanced himself a little as if to steady his aim, then stepping at once forward, drew the scimitar across the cushion, applying the edge so dexterously, and with so little apparent effort, that the cushion seemed rather to fall asunder than to be divided by violence.

'It is a juggler's trick,' said De Vaux, darting forward and snatching up the portion of the cushion which had been cut off, as if to assure himself of the reality of the feat; 'there is gramarye in this.'

The Soldan seemed to comprehend him, for he undid the sort of veil which he had hitherto worn, laid it double along the edge of his sabre, extended the weapon edgeways in the air, and drawing it suddenly through the veil, although it hung on the blade entirely loose, severed that also into two parts, which floated to different sides of the tent, equally displaying the extreme temper and sharpness of the weapon and the exquisite dexterity of him who used it

'Now, in good faith, my brother,' said Richard, 'thou art even matchless at the trick of the sword, and right perilous were it to meet thee. Still, however, I put some faith in a downright English blow, and what we cannot do by sleight we eke out by strength. Nevertheless, in truth thou art as expert in inflicting wounds as my sage Hakim in curing them. I trust I shall see the learned leech; I have much to thank him for, and had brought some small present.'

As he spoke, Saladin exchanged his turban for a Tartar cap. He had no sooner done so, than De Vaux opened at once his extended mouth and his large round eyes, and Richard gazed with scarce less astonishment, while the Soldan spoke in a grave and altered voice: 'The sick man, sayeth the poet, while he is yet infirm, knoweth the physician by his step; but when he is recovered, he knoweth not even his face when he looks upon him.'

'A miracle! — a miracle!' exclaimed Richard.

'Of Mahound's working, doubtless,' said Thomas de Vaux.

'That I should lose my learned Hakim,' said Richard, 'merely by absence of his cap and robe, and that I should find him again in my royal brother Saladin!'

'Such is oft the fashion of the world, answered the Soldan: 'the tattered robe makes not always the dervise.'

'And it was through thy intercession,' said Richard, 'that yonder Knight of the Leopard was saved from death; and by thy artifice that he revisited my camp in disguise?'

'Even so,' replied Saladin; 'I was physician enough to know that, unless the wounds of his bleeding honour were stanched, the days of his life must be few. His disguise was more easily penetrated than I had expected from the success of my own.'

'An accident,' said King Richard (probably alluding to the circumstance of his applying his lips to the wound of the supposed Nubian), 'let me first know that his skin was artificially discoloured; and that hint once taken, detection became easy, for his form and person are not to be forgotten. I confidently expect that he will do battle on the morrow.'

'He is full in preparation and high in hope,' said the Soldan. 'I have furnished him with weapons and horse, thinking nobly of him from what I have seen under various disguises.'

'Knows he now,' said Richard, 'to whom he lies under obligation?'

'He doth,' replied the Saracen; 'I was obliged to confess my person when I unfolded my purpose.'

'And confessed he aught to you?' said the King of England.

'Nothing explicit,' replied the Soldan; 'but from much that passed between us, I conceive his love is too highly placed to be happy in its issue.'

'And thou knowest that his daring and insolent passion crossed thine own wishes?' said Richard.

'I might guess so much,' said Saladin; 'but his passion had existed ere my wishes had been formed, and, I must now add, is likely to survive them. I cannot, in honour, revenge me for my disappointment on him who had no hand in it. Or, if this high-born dame loved him better than myself, who can say that she did not justice to a knight, of her own religion, who is full of nobleness?'

'Yet of too mean lineage to mix with the blood of Plantagenet,' said Richard, haughtily.

'Such may be your maxims in Frangistan,' replied the Soldan. 'Our poets of the Eastern countries say, that a valiant camel-driver is worthy to kiss the lip of a fair queen, when a cowardly prince is not worthy to salute the hem of her garment. But with your permission, noble brother, I must take leave of thee for the present, to receive the Duke of Austria and yonder Nazarene knight, much less worthy of hospitality, but who must yet be suitably entreated, not for their sakes, but for mine own honour, for what saith the sage Lokman — "Say not that the food is lost unto thee which is given to the stranger; for if his body be strengthened and fattened therewithal, not less is thine own worship and good name cherished and augmented"?'

The Saracen monarch departed from King Richard's tent, and having indicated to him, rather with signs than with speech, where the pavilion of the Queen and her attendants was pitched, he went to receive the Marquis of Montserrat and his attendants, for whom, with less good-will, but with equal splendour, the magnificent Soldan had provided accommodations. The most ample refreshments, both in the Oriental and after the European fashion, were spread before the royal and princely guests of Saladin, each in their own separate pavilion; and so attentive was the Soldan to the habits and taste of his visitors, that Grecian slaves were stationed to present them with the goblet, which is the abomination of the sect of Mohammed. Ere Richard had finished his meal, the ancient *emirah*, who had brought the Soldan's letter to the Christian camp, entered with a plan of the ceremonial to be observed on the succeeding day

of combat. Richard, who knew the taste of his old acquaintance, invited him to pledge him in a flagon of wine of Schiraz but Abdallah gave him to understand, with a rueful aspect, that self-denial, in the present circumstances, was a matter in which his life was concerned; for that Saladin, tolerant in many respects, both observed and enforced by high penalties the laws of the Prophet.

'Nay, then,' said Richard, 'if he loves not wine, that lightener of the human heart, his conversion is not to be hoped for, and the prediction of the mad priest of Engaddi goes like chaff down the wind.'

The King then addressed himself to settle the articles of combat, which cost a considerable time, as it was necessary on some points to consult with the opposite parties, as well as with the Soldan.

They were at length finally agreed upon, and adjusted by a protocol in French and in Arabian, which was subscribed by Saladin as umpire of the field, and by Richard and Leopold as guarantees for the two combatants. As the *emirah* took his final leave of King Richard for the evening, De Vaux entered.

'The good knight,' he said, 'who is to do battle to-morrow requests to know whether he may not to night pay duty to his royal godfather?'

'Hast thou seen him, De Vaux?' said the King, smiling: 'and didst thou know an ancient acquaintance?'

'By our Lady of Lanercost,' answered De Vaux, 'there are so many surprises and changes in this land, that my poor brain turns. I scarce knew Sir Kenneth of Scotland till his good hound, that had been for a short while under my care, came and fawned on me; and even then I only knew the tyke by the depth of his chest, the roundness of his foot, and his manner of baying; for the poor gaze-hound was painted like any Venetian courtezan.'

'Thou art better skilled in brutes than men, De Vaux,' said the King.

'I will not deny,' said De Vaux, 'I have found them ofttimes the honester animals. Also, your Grace is pleased to term me sometimes a brute myself; besides that I serve the Lion, whom all men acknowledge the king of brutes.'

'By St. George, there thou brokest thy lance fairly on my brow,' said the King. 'I have ever said thou hast a sort of wit, De Vaux — marry, one must strike thee with a sledge-

hammer ere it can be made to sparkle. But to the present gear; is the good knight well armed and equipped?'

'Fully, my liege, and nobly,' answered De Vaux; 'I know the armour well: it is that which the Venetian commissary offered your Highness, just ere you became ill, for five hundred byzants.'

'And he hath sold it to the infidel Soldan, I warrant me, for a few ducats more, and present payment. These Venetians would sell the Sepulchre itself!'

'The armour will never be borne in a nobler cause,' said De Vaux.

'Thanks to the nobleness of the Saracen,' said the King, 'not to the avarice of the Venetians.'

'I would to God your Grace would be more cautious,' said the anxious De Vaux. 'Here are we deserted by all our allies, for points of offence given to one or another; we cannot hope to prosper upon the land, and we have only to quarrel with the amphibious republic to lose the means of retreat by sea!'

'I will take care,' said Richard, impatiently; 'but school me no more. Tell me rather, for it is of interest, hath the knight a confessor?'

'He hath,' answered De Vaux: 'the hermit of Engaddi, who erst did him that office when preparing for death, attends him on the present occasion, the fame of the duel having brought him hither.'

''Tis well,' said Richard; 'and now for the knight's request. Say to him, Richard will receive him when the discharge of his devoir beside the Diamond of the Desert shall have atoned for his fault beside the Mount of St. George; and as thou passest through the camp, let the Queen know I will visit her pavilion; and tell Blondel to meet me there.'

De Vaux departed, and in about an hour afterwards, Richard, wrapping his mantle around him, and taking his ghittern in his hand, walked in the direction of the Queen's pavilion. Several Arabs passed him, but always with averted heads and looks fixed upon the earth, though he could observe that all gazed earnestly after him when he was past. This led him justly to conjecture that his person was known to them, but that either the Soldan's commands or their own Oriental politeness forbade them to seem to notice a sovereign who desired to remain incognito.

When the King reached the pavilion of his Queen, he found it guarded by those unhappy officials whom Eastern jealousy

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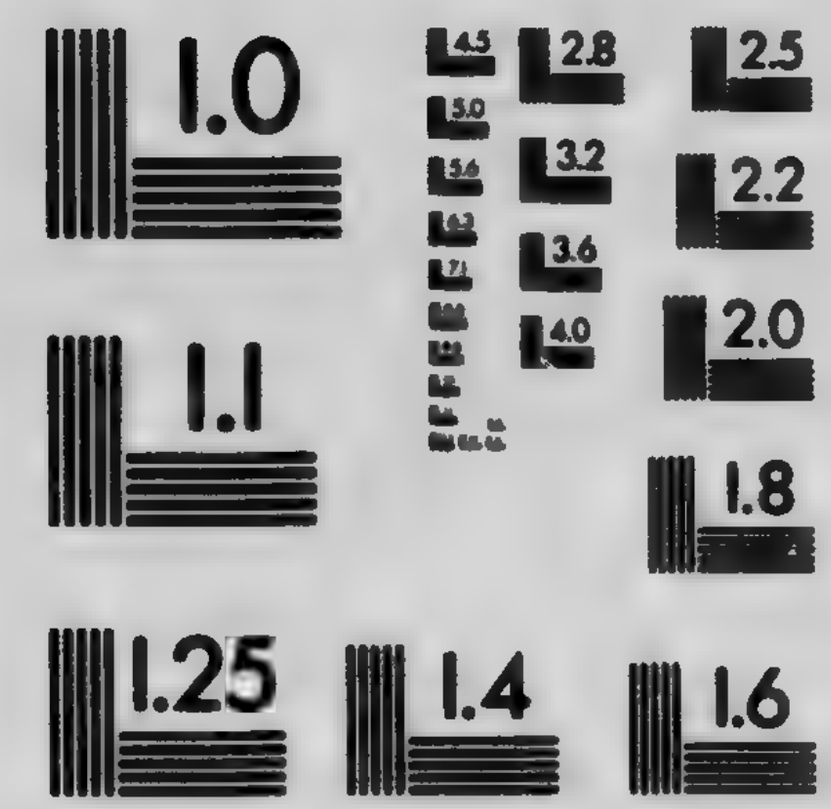

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places around the zenana. Blondel was walking before the door, and touched his rote from time to time in a manner which made the Africans show their ivory teeth, and bear burden with their strange gestures and shrill unnatural voices.

'What art thou after with this herd of black cattle, Blondel?' said the King. 'Wherefore goest thou not into the tent?'

'Because my trade can neither spare the head nor the fingers,' said Blondel; 'and these honest blackamoors threatened to cut me joint from joint if I pressed forward.'

'Well, enter with me,' said the King, 'and I will be thy safeguard.'

The blacks accordingly lowered pikes and swords to King Richard, and bent their eyes on the ground, as if unworthy to look upon him. In the interior of the pavilion, they found Thomas de Vaux in attendance on the Queen. While Berengaria welcomed Blondel, King Richard spoke for some time secretly and apart with his fair kinswoman.

At length, 'Are we still foes, my fair Edith?' he said, in a whisper.

'No, my liege,' said Edith, in a voice just so low as not to interrupt the music: 'none can bear enmity against King Richard, when he deigns to show himself as he really is, generous and noble, as well as valiant and honourable.' So saying, she extended her hand to him.

The King kissed it in token of reconciliation, and then proceeded. 'You think, my sweet cousin, that my anger in this matter was feigned; but you are deceived. The punishment I inflicted upon this knight was just; for he had betrayed — no matter for how tempting a bribe, fair cousin — the trust committed to him. But I rejoice, perchance as much as you, that to-morrow gives him a chance to win the field, and throw back the stain which for a time clung to him upon the actual thief and traitor. No! future times may blame Richard for impetuous folly; but they shall say that, in rendering judgment, he was just when he should, and merciful when he could.'

'Laud not thyself, cousin King,' said Edith. 'They may call thy justice cruelty, thy mercy caprice.'

'And do not thou pride thyself,' said the King, 'as if thy knight, who hath not yet buckled on his armour, were unbelting it in triumph. Conrade of Montserrat is held a good lance. What if the Scot should lose the day?'

'It is impossible!' said Edith, firmly. 'My own eyes saw yonder Conrade tremble and change colour, like a base thief.

He is guilty, and the trial by combat is an appeal to the justice of God. I myself, in such a cause, would encounter him without fear.'

'By the mass, I think thou wouldst, wench,' said the King, 'and beat him to boot; for there never breathed a truer Plantagenet than thou.'

He paused, and added in a very serious tone, 'See that thou continue to remember what is due to thy birth.'

'What means that advice, so seriously given at this moment?' said Edith. 'Am I of such light nature as to forget my name — my condition?'

'I will speak plainly, Edith,' answered the King, 'and as to a friend: What will this knight be to you, should he come off victor from yonder lists?'

'To *me?*' said Edith, blushing deep with shame and displeasure. 'What *can* he be to me more than an honoured knight, worthy of such grace as Queen Berengaria might confer on him, had he selected her for his lady, instead of a more unworthy choice? The meanest knight may devote himself to the service of an empress, but the glory of his choice,' she said proudly, 'must be his reward.'

'Yet he hath served and suffered much for you,' said the King.

'I have paid his services with honour and applause, and his sufferings with tears,' answered Edith. 'Had he desired other reward, he would have done wisely to have bestowed his affections within his own degree.'

'You would not then wear the bloody night-gear for his sake?' said King Richard.

'No more,' answered Edith, 'than I would have required him to expose his life by an action in which there was more madness than honour.'

'Maidens talk ever thus,' said the King; 'but when the favoured lover presses his suit, she says, with a sigh, her stars had decreed otherwise.'

'Your Grace has now, for the second time, threatened me with the influence of my horoscope,' Edith replied, with dignity. 'Trust me, my liege, whatever be the power of the stars, your poor kinswoman will never wed either infidel or obscure adventurer. Permit me, that I listen to the music of Blondel, for the tone of your royal admonitions is scarce so grateful to the ear.'

The conclusion of the evening offered nothing worthy of notice.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Heard ye the din of battle bray,
Lance to lance, and horse to horse?

GRAY.

IT had been agreed, on account of the heat of the climate, that the judicial combat, which was the cause of the present assemblage of various nations at the Diamond of the Desert, should take place at one hour after sunrise. The wide lists, which had been constructed under the inspection of the Knight of the Leopard, inclosed a space of hard sand, which was one hundred and twenty yards long by forty in width. They extended in length from north to south, so as to give both parties the equal advantage of the rising sun. Saladin's royal seat was erected on the western side of the inclosure, just in the centre, where the combatants were expected to meet in mid encounter. Opposed to this was a gallery with closed casements, so contrived that the ladies, for whose accommodation it was erected, might see the fight without being themselves exposed to view. At either extremity of the lists was a barrier, which could be opened or shut at pleasure. Thrones had been also erected, but the Archduke, perceiving that his was lower than King Richard's, refused to occupy it; and Cœur-de-Lion, who would have submitted to much ere any formality should have interfered with the combat, readily agreed that the sponsors, as they were called, should remain on horseback during the fight. At one extremity of the lists were placed the followers of Richard, and opposed to them were those who accompanied the defender, Conrade. Around the throne destined for the Soldan were ranged his splendid Georgian Guards, and the rest of the inclosure was occupied by Christian and Mohammedan spectators.

Long before daybreak, the lists were surrounded by even a larger number of Saracens than Richard had seen on the preceding evening. When the first ray of the sun's glorious orb

arose above the desert, the sonorous call, 'To prayer - - to prayer!' was poured forth by the Soldan himself, and answered by others, whose rank and zeal entitled them to act as muezzins. It was a striking spectacle to see them all sink to earth, for the purpose of repeating their devotions, with their faces turned to Mecca. But when they arose from the ground, the sun's rays, now strengthening fast, seemed to confirm the Lord of Gilsland's conjecture of the night before. They were flashed back from many a spear-head, for the pointless lances of the preceding day were certainly no longer such. De Vaux pointed it out to his master, who answered with impatience, that he had perfect confidence in the good faith of the Soldan; but if De Vaux was afraid of his bulky body, he might retire.

Soon after this the noise of timbrels was heard, at the sound of which the whole Saracen cavaliers threw themselves from their horses, and prostrated themselves, as if for a second morning prayer. This was to give an opportunity to the Queen, with Edith and her attendants, to pass from the pavilion to the gallery intended for them. Fifty guards of Saladin's seraglio escorted them, with naked sabres, whose orders were, to cut to pieces whomsoever, were he prince or peasant, should venture to gaze on the ladies as they passed, or even presume to raise his head until the cessation of the music should make all men aware that they were lodged in their gallery, not to be gazed on by the curious eye.

This superstitious observance of Oriental reverence to the fair sex called forth from Queen Berengaria some criticisms very unfavourable to Saladin and his country. But their den, as the royal fair called it, being securely closed and guarded by their sable attendants, she was under the necessity of contenting herself with seeing, and laying aside for the present the still more exquisite pleasure of being seen.

Meantime the sponsors of both champions went, as was their duty, to see that they were duly armed, and prepared for combat. The Archduke of Austria was in no hurry to perform this part of the ceremony, having had rather an unusually severe debauch upon wine of Schiraz the preceding evening. But the Grand Master of the Temple, more deeply concerned in the event of the combat, was early before the tent of Conrade of Montserrat. To his great surprise, the attendants refused him admittance.

'Do you not know me, ye knaves?' said the Grand Master, in great anger.

'We do, most valiant and reverend,' answered Conrade's squire; 'but even *you* may not at present enter: the Marquis is about to confess himself.'

'Confess himself!' exclaimed the Templar, in a tone where alarm mingled with surprise and scorn; 'and to whom, I pray thee?'

'My master bid me be secret,' said the squire; on which the Grand Master pushed past him, and entered the tent almost by force.

The Marquis of Montserrat was kneeling at the feet of the hermit of Engaddi, and in the act of beginning his confession.

'What means this, Marquis?' said the Grand Master; 'up, for shame — or, if you must needs confess, am not I here?'

'I have confessed to you too often already,' replied Conrade, with a pale cheek and a faltering voice. 'For God's sake, Grand Master, begone, and let me unfold my conscience to this holy man.'

'In what is he holier than I am?' said the Grand Master. 'Hermit — prophet — madman, say, if thou darest, in what thou excellest me?'

'Bold and bad man,' replied the hermit, 'know that I am like the latticed window, and the divine light passes through to avail others, though, alas! it helpeth not me. Thou art like the iron stanchions, which neither receive light themselves nor communicate it to any one.'

'Prate not to me, but depart from this tent,' said the Grand Master; 'the Marquis shall not confess this morning, unless it be to me, for I part not from his side.'

'Is this *your* pleasure?' said the hermit to Conrade; 'for think not I will obey that proud man, if you continue to desire my assistance.'

'Alas,' said Conrade, irresolutely, 'what would you have me say? Farewell for a while; we will speak anon.'

'Oh, procrastination,' exclaimed the hermit, 'thou art a soul-murderer! Unhappy man, farewell, not for a while, but until we shall both meet — no matter where. And for thee,' he added, turning to the Grand Master, 'TREMBLE!'

'Tremble!' replied the Templar, contemptuously, 'I cannot if I would.'

The hermit heard not his answer, having left the tent.

'Come, to this gear hastily,' said the Grand Master, 'since thou wilt needs go through the foolery. Hark thee, I think I know most of thy frailties by heart, so we may omit the-

detail, which may be somewhat a long one, and begin with the absolution. What signifies counting the spots of dirt that we are about to wash from our hands?'

'Knowing what thou art thyself,' said Conrade, 'it is blasphemous to speak of pardoning another.'

'That is not according to the canon, Lord Marquis,' said the Templar: 'thou art more scrupulous than orthodox. The absolution of the wicked priest is as effectual as if he were himself a saint; otherwise, God help the poor penitent! What wounded man inquires whether the surgeon that tents his gashes have clean hands or no? Come, shall we to this toy?'

'No,' said Conrade, 'I will rather die unconfessed than mock the sacrament.'

'Come, noble Marquis,' said the Templar, 'rouse up your courage, and speak not thus. In an hour's time thou shalt stand victorious in the lists, or confess thee in thy helmet like a valiant knight.'

'Alas, Grand Master,' answered Conrade, 'all augurs ill for this affair. The strange discovery by the instinct of a dog, the revival of this Scottish knight, who comes into the lists like a spectre — all betokens evil.'

'Pshaw,' said the Templar, 'I have seen thee bend thy lance boldly against him in sport, and with equal chance of success; think thou art but in a tournament, and who bears him better in the tilt-yard than thou? Come, squires and armourers, your master must be accoutred for the field.'

The attendants entered accordingly, and began to arm the Marquis.

'What morning is without?' said Conrade.

'The sun rises dimly,' answered a squire.

'Thou seest, Grand Master,' said Conrade, 'nought smiles on us.'

'Thou wilt fight the more coolly, my son,' answered the Templar; 'thank Heaven, that hath tempered the sun of Palestine to suit thine occasion.'

Thus jested the Grand Master; but his jests had lost their influence on the harassed mind of the Marquis, and, notwithstanding his attempts to seem gay, his gloom communicated itself to the Templar.

'This craven,' he thought, 'will lose the day in pure faintness and cowardice of heart, which he calls tender conscience. I, whom visions and auguries shake not — who am firm in my purpose as the living rock — I should have fought the combat

myself. Would to God the Scot may strike him dead on the spot; it were next best to his winning the victory. But come what will, he must have no other confessor than myself; our sins are too much in common, and he might confess my share with his own.'

While these thoughts passed through his mind, he continued to assist the Marquis in arming, but it was in silence.

The hour at length arrived, the trumpets sounded, the knights rode into the lists armed at all points, and mounted like men who were to do battle for a kingdom's honour. They wore their visors up, and riding around the lists three times, showed themselves to the spectators. Both were goodly persons, and both had noble countenances. But there was an air of manly confidence on the brow of the Scot — a radiancy of hope, which amounted even to cheerfulness, while, although pride and effort had recalled much of Conrade's natural courage, there lowered still on his brow a cloud of ominous despondence. Even his steed seemed to tread less lightly and blythely to the trumpet-sound than the noble Arab which was bestrode by Sir Kenneth; and the *spruchsprecher* shook his head while he observed that, while the challenger rode around the lists in the course of the sun, that is, from right to left, the defender made the same circuit *widdersins*, that is, from left to right, which is in most countries held ominous.

A temporary altar was erected just beneath the gallery occupied by the Queen, and beside it stood the hermit in the dress of his order as a Carmelite friar. Other churchmen were also present. To this altar the challenger and defender were successively brought forward, conducted by their respective sponsors. Dismounting before it, each knight avouched the justice of his cause by a solemn oath on the Evangelists, and prayed that his success might be according to the truth or falsehood of what he then swore. They also made oath that they came to do battle in knightly guise, and with the usual weapons, disclaiming the use of spells, charms, or magical devices, to incline victory to their side. The challenger pronounced his vow with a firm and manly voice, and a bold and cheerful countenance. When the ceremony was finished, the Scottish knight looked at the gallery, and bent his head to the earth, as if in honour of those invisible beauties which were inclosed within; then, loaded with armour as he was, sprung to the saddle without the use of the stirrup, and made his courser carry him in a succession of caracoles to his station at the

eastern extremity of the lists. Conrade also presented himself before the altar with boldness enough; but his voice, as he took the oath, sounded hollow, as if drowned in his helmet. The lips with which he appealed to Heaven to adjudge victory to the just quarrel grew white as they uttered the impious mockery. As he turned to remount his horse, the Grand Master approached him closer, as if to rectify something about the sitting of his gorget, and whispered — 'Coward and fool! recall thy senses, and do me this battle bravely, else, by Heaven, shouldst thou escape him, thou escapest not *me!*'

The savage tone in which this was whispered perhaps completed the confusion of the Marquis's nerves, for he stumbled as he made to horse; and though he recovered his feet, sprung to the saddle with his usual agility, and displayed his address in horsemanship as he assumed his position opposite to the challenger's, yet the accident did not escape those who were on the watch for omens, which might predict the fate of the day.

The priests, after a solemn prayer that God would show the rightful quarrel, departed from the lists. The trumpets of the challenger then rung a flourish, and a herald-at-arms proclaimed at the eastern end of the lists — 'Here stands a good knight, Sir Kenneth of Scotland, champion for the royal King Richard of England, who accuseth Conrade Marquis of Montserrat of foul treason and dishonour done to the said king.'

When the words Kenneth of Scotland announced the name and character of the champion, hitherto scarce generally known, a loud and cheerful acclaim burst from the followers of King Richard, and hardly, notwithstanding repeated commands of silence, suffered the reply of the defendant to be heard. He, of course avouched his innocence, and offered his body for battle. Squires of the combatants now approached, and delivered to them his shield and lance, assisting to hang the former about his neck, that his two hands might remain free, one for management of the bridle, the other to direct the lance.

The shield of the Scot displayed his old bearing, the leopard, but with the addition of a collar and broken chain, in allusion to his late captivity. The shield of the Marquis bore, in reference to his title, a serrated and rocky mountain. Each shook his lance aloft, as if to ascertain the weight and toughness of the unwieldy weapon, and then laid it in the rest. The sponsors, heralds, and squires now retired to the barriers, and the combatants sat opposite to each other, face to face, with

couched lance and closed visor, the human form so completely inclosed that they looked more like statues of molten iron than beings of flesh and blood. The silence of suspense was now general: men breathed thicker, and their very souls seemed seated in their eyes, while not a sound was to be heard save the snorting and pawing of the good steeds, who, sensible of what was about to happen, were impatient to dash into career. They stood thus for perhaps three minutes, when, at a signal given by the Soldan, an hundred instruments rent the air with their brazen clamours, and each champion striking his horse with the spurs and slacking the rein, the horses started into full gallop, and the knights met in mid space with a shock like a thunderbolt. The victory was not in doubt — no, not one moment. Conrade, indeed, showed himself a practised warrior; for he struck his antagonist knightly in the midst of his shield, bearing his lance so straight and true that it shivered into splinters from the steel spear-head up to the very gauntlet. The horse of Sir Kenneth recoiled two or three yards and fell on his haunches, but the rider easily raised him with hand and rein. But for Conrade there was no recovery. Sir Kenneth's lance had pierced through the shield, through a plated corslet of Milan steel, through a 'secret,' or coat of linked mail, worn beneath the corslet, had wounded him deep in the bosom, and borne him from his saddle, leaving the truncheon of the lance fixed in his wound. The sponsors, heralds, and Saladin himself, descending from his throne, crowded around the wounded man; while Sir Kenneth, who had drawn his sword ere yet he discovered his antagonist was totally helpless, now commanded him to avow his guilt. The helmet was hastily unclosed, and the wounded man, gazing wildly on the skies, replied — 'What would you more? God hath decided justly: I am guilty; but there are worse traitors in the camp than I. In pity to my soul, let me have a confessor!'

He revived as he uttered these words.

'The talisman — the powerful remedy, royal brother!' said King Richard to Saladin.

'The traitor,' answered the Soldan, 'is more fit to be dragged from the lists to the gallows by the heels than to profit by its virtues; and some such fate is in his look,' he added, after gazing fixedly upon the wounded man; 'for, though his wound may be cured, yet Azrael's seal is on the wretch's brow.'

'Nevertheless,' said Richard, 'I pray you do for him what you may, that he may at least have time for confession. Slay

not soul and body. To him one half-hour of time may be worth more, by ten thousandfold, than the life of the oldest patriarch.'

'My royal brother's wish shall be obeyed,' said Saladin. 'Slaves, bear this wounded man to our tent.'

'Do not so,' said the Templar, who had hitherto stood gloomily looking on in silence. 'The royal Duke of Austria and myself will not permit this unhappy Christian prince to be delivered over to the Saracens, that they may try their spells upon him. We are his sponsors, and demand that he be assigned to our care.'

'That is, you refuse the certain means offered to recover him?' said Richard.

'Not so,' said the Grand Master, recollecting himself. 'If the Soldan useth lawful medicines, he may attend the patient in my tent.'

'Do so, I pray thee, good brother,' said Richard to Saladin, 'though the permission be ungraciously yielded. But now to a more glorious work. Sound, trumpets — shout, England — in honour of England's champion!'

Drum, clarion, trumpet, and cymbal rung forth at once, and the deep and regular shout which for ages has been the English acclamation sounded amidst the shrill and irregular yells of the Arabs, like the diapason of the organ amid the howling of a storm. There was silence at length.

'Brave Knight of the Leopard,' resumed Cœur-de-Lion, 'thou hast shown that the Ethiopian *may* change his skin, and the leopard his spots, though clerks quote Scripture for the impossibility. Yet I have more to say to you when I have conducted you to the presence of the ladies, the best judges and best rewarders of deeds of chivalry.'

The Knight of the Leopard bowed assent.

'And thou, princely Saladin, wilt also attend them. I promise thee our Queen will not think herself welcome, if she lacks the opportunity to thank her royal host for her most princely reception.'

Saladin bent his head gracefully, but declined the invitation.

'I must attend the wounded man,' he said. 'The leech leaves not his patient more than the champion the lists, even if he be summoned to a bower like those of Paradise. And farther, royal Richard, know that the blood of the East flows not so temperately in the presence of beauty as that of your land. What saith the Book itself — "Her eye is as the edge of

the sword of the Prophet, who shall look upon it?" He that would not be burnt avoideth to tread on hot embers; wise men spread not the flax before a bickering torch. "He," saith the sage, "who hath forfeited a treasure, doth not wisely to turn back his head to gaze at it."'

Richard, it may be believed, respected the motives of delicacy which flowed from manners so different from his own, and urged his request no farther.

'At noon,' said the Soldan, as he departed, 'I trust ye will all accept a collation under the black camel-skin tent of a chief of Kurdistan.'

The same invitation was circulated among the Christians, comprehending all those of sufficient importance to be admitted to sit at a feast made for princes.

'Hark!' said Richard, 'the timbrels announce that our Queen and her attendants are leaving their gallery; and see, the turbans sink on the ground, as if struck down by a destroying angel. All lie prostrate, as if the glance of an Arab's eye could sully the lustre of a lady's cheek! Come, we will to the pavilion, and lead our conqueror thither in triumph. How I pity that noble Soldan, who knows but of love as it is known to those of inferior nature!'

Blondel tuned his harp to its boldest measure, to welcome the introduction of the victor into the pavilion of Queen Berengaria. He entered, supported on either side by his sponsors, Richard and Thomas [William] Longsword, and knelt gracefully down before the Queen, though more than half the homage was silently rendered to Edith, who sat on her right hand.

'Unarm him, my mistresses,' said the King, whose delight was in the execution of such chivalrous usages. 'Let beauty honour chivalry! Undo his spurs, Berengaria; Queen though thou be, thou owest him what marks of favour thou canst give. Unlace his helmet, Edith — by this hand thou shalt, wert thou the proudest Plantagenet of the line, and he the poorest knight on earth!'

Both ladies obeyed the royal commands — Berengaria with bustling assiduity, as anxious to gratify her husband's humour, and Edith blushing and growing pale alternately, as slowly and awkwardly she undid, with Longsword's assistance, the fastenings which secured the helmet to the gorget.

'And what expect you from beneath this iron shell?' said Richard, as the removal of the casque gave to view the noble countenance of Sir Kenneth, his face glowing with recent

exertion, and not less so with present emotion. 'What think ye of him, gallants and beauties?' said Richard. 'Doth he resemble an Ethiopian slave, or doth he present the face of an obscure and nameless adventurer? No, by my good sword! Here terminate his various disguises. He hath knelt down before you unknown save by his worth; he arises equally distinguished by birth and by fortune. The adventurous knight, Kenneth, arises David Earl of Huntingdon, Prince Royal of Scotland!'

There was a general exclamation of surprise, and Edith dropped from her hand the helmet which she had just received.

'Yes, my masters,' said the King, 'it is even so. Ye know how Scotland deceived us when she proposed to send this valiant earl, with a bold company of her best and noblest, to aid our arms in this conquest of Palestine, but failed to comply with her engagements. This noble youth, under whom the Scottish Crusaders were to have been arrayed, thought foul scorn that his arm should be withheld from the holy warfare, and joined us at Sicily with a small train of devoted and faithful attendants, which was augmented by many of his countrymen to whom the rank of their leader was unknown. The confidants of the royal prince had all, save one old follower, fallen by death, when his secret, but too well kept, had nearly occasioned my cutting off, in a Scottish adventurer, one of the noblest hopes of Europe. Why did you not mention your rank, noble Huntingdon, when endangered by my hasty and passionate sentence? Was it that you thought Richard capable of abusing the advantage I possessed over the heir of a king whom I have so often found hostile?'

'I did you not that injustice, royal Richard,' answered the Earl of Huntingdon; 'but my pride brooked not that I should avow myself Prince of Scotland in order to save my life, endangered for default of loyalty. And, moreover, I had made my vow to preserve my rank unknown till the Crusade should be accomplished; nor did I mention it save *in articulo mortis*, and under the seal of confession, to yonder reverend hermit.'

'It was the knowledge of that secret, then, which made the good man so urgent with me to recall my severe sentence?' said Richard. 'Well did he say that, had this good knight fallen by my mandate, I should have wished the deed undone though it had cost me a limb. A limb! I should have wished it undone had it cost me my life, since the world would

have said that Richard had abused the condition in which the heir of Scotland had placed himself, by his confidence in his generosity.'

'Yet, may we know of your Grace by what strange and happy chance this riddle was at length read?' said the Queen Berengaria.

'Letters were brought to us from England,' said the King, 'in which we learnt, among other unpleasant news, that the King of Scotland had seized upon three of our nobles, when on a pilgrimage to St. Ninian, and alleged as a cause that his heir, being supposed to be fighting in the ranks of the Teutonic Knights against the heathen of Borussia, was, in fact, in our camp and in our power; and, therefore, William proposed to hold these nobles as hostages for his safety. This gave me the first light on the real rank of the Knight of the Leopard, and my suspicions were confirmed by De Vaux, who, on his return from Ascalon, brought back with him the Earl of Huntingdon's sole attendant, a thick-skulled slave, who had gone thirty miles to unfold to De Vaux a secret he should have told to me.'

'Old Strauchan must be excused,' said the Lord of Gilsland. 'He knew from experience that my heart is somewhat softer than if I wrote myself Plantagenet.'

'Thy heart soft, thou commodity of old iron and Cumberland flint that thou art!' exclaimed the King. 'It is we Plantagenets who boast soft and feeling hearts, Edith,' turning to his cousin, with an expression which called the blood into her cheek. 'Give me thy hand, my fair cousin, and, Prince of Scotland, thine.'

'Forbear, my lord,' said Edith, hanging back, and endeavouring to hide her confusion under an attempt to rally her royal kinsman's credulity. 'Remember you not that my hand was to be the signal of converting to the Christian faith the Saracen and Arab, Saladin and all his turbaned host?'

'Ay, but the wind of prophecy hath chopped about, and sits now in another corner,' replied Richard.

'Mock not, lest your bonds be made strong,' said the hermit, stepping forward. 'The heavenly host write nothing but truth in their brilliant records: it is man's eyes which are too weak to read their characters aright. Know that, when Saladin and Kenneth of Scotland slept in my grotto, I read in the stars that there rested under my roof a prince, the natural foe of Richard, with whom the fate of Edith Plantagenet was to be united. Could I doubt that this must be the Soldan

whose rank was well known to me, as he often visited my cell to converse on the revolutions of the heavenly bodies? Again, the lights of the firmament proclaimed that this prince, the husband of Edith Plantagenet, should be a Christian; and I — weak and wild interpreter! — argued thence the conversion of the noble Saladin, whose good qualities seemed often to incline him towards the better faith. The sense of my weakness hath humbled me to the dust, but in the dust I have found comfort. I have not read aright the fate of others; who can assure me but that I may have miscalculated mine own? God will not have us break into His council-house or spy out His hidden mysteries. We must wait His time with watching and prayer, with fear and with hope. I came hither the stern seer — the proud prophet — skilled, as I thought, to instruct princes, and gifted even with supernatural powers, but burdened with a weight which I deemed no shoulders but mine could have borne. But my bands have been broken: I go hence humble in mine ignorance, penitent, and not hopeless.'

With these words he withdrew from the assembly; and it is recorded that, from that period, his frenzy fits seldom occurred, and his penances were of a milder character, and accompanied with better hopes of the future. So much is there of self-opinion, even in insanity, that the conviction of his having entertained and expressed an unfounded prediction with so much vehemence seemed to operate, like loss of blood on the human frame, to modify and lower the fever of the brain.

It is needless to follow into farther particulars the conferences at the royal tent, or to inquire whether David Earl of Huntingdon was as mute in the presence of Edith Plantagenet as when he was bound to act under the character of an obscure and nameless adventurer. It may be well believed that he there expressed, with suitable earnestness, the passion to which he had so often before found it difficult to give words.

The hour of noon now approached, and Saladin waited to receive the princes of Christendom in a tent which, but for its large size, differed little from that of the ordinary shelter of the common Kurdman, or Arab; yet beneath its ample and sable covering was prepared a banquet after the most gorgeous fashion of the East, extended upon carpets of the richest stuffs, with cushions laid for the guests. But we cannot stop to describe the cloth of gold and silver, the superb embroidery in arabesque, the shawls of cashmere, and the muslins of

India, which were here unfolded in all their splendour; far less to tell the different sweetmeats, ragouts edged with rice coloured in various manners, with all the other niceties of Eastern cookery. Lambs roasted whole, and game and poultry dressed in pilaus, were piled in vessels of gold, and silver, and porcelain, and intermixed with large mazers of sherbet, cooled in snow and ice from the caverns of Mount Lebanon. A magnificent pile of cushions at the head of the banquet seemed prepared for the master of the feast and such dignitaries as he might call to share that place of distinction, while, from the roof of the tent in all quarters, but over this seat of eminence in particular, waved many a banner and pennon, the trophies of battles won and kingdoms overthrown. But amongst and above them all, a long lance displayed a shroud, the banner of Death, with this impressive inscription — 'SALADIN, KING OF KINGS — SALADIN, VICTOR OF VICTORS — SALADIN MUST DIE.' Amid these preparations, the slaves who had arranged the refreshments stood with drooped heads and folded arms, mute and motionless as monumental statuary, or as automata, which waited the touch of the artist to put them in motion.

Expecting the approach of his princely guests, the Soldan, imbued, as most were, with the superstitions of his time, paused over a horoscope and corresponding scroll, which had been sent to him by the hermit of Engaddi when he departed from the camp.

'Strange and mysterious science,' he muttered to himself, 'which, pretending to draw the curtain of futurity, misleads those whom it seems to guide, and darkens the scene which it pretends to illuminate! Who would not have said that I was that enemy most dangerous to Richard, whose enmity was to be ended by marriage with his kinswoman? Yet it now appears that a union betwixt this gallant earl and the lady will bring about friendship betwixt Richard and Scotland, an enemy more dangerous than I, as a wildcat in a chamber is more to be dreaded than a lion in a distant desert. But then,' he continued to mutter to himself, 'the combination intimates that this husband was to be Christian. Christian!' he repeated, after a pause. 'That gave the insane, fanatic star-gazer hopes that I might renounce my faith! but me, the faithful follower of our Prophet — me it should have undeceived. Lie there, mysterious scroll,' he added, thrusting it under the pile of cushions; 'strange are thy bodements and fatal, since, even when true in themselves, they work upon those who attempt to decipher their

meaning all the effects of falsehood. How now! what means this intrusion?'

He spoke to the dwarf Nectabanus, who rushed into the tent fearfully agitated, with each strange and disproportioned feature wrenched by horror into still more extravagant ugliness—his mouth open, his eyes staring, his hands, with their shrivelled and deformed fingers, wildly expanded.

'What now?' said the Soldan, sternly.

'*Accipe hoc!*' groaned out the dwarf.

'Ha! sayst thou?' answered Saladin.

'*Accipe hoc!*' replied the panic-struck creature, unconscious, perhaps, that he repeated the same words as before.

'Hence, I am in no vein for foolery,' said the Emperor.

'Nor am I further fool,' said the dwarf, 'than to make my folly help out my wits to earn my bread, poor helpless wretch! Hear—hear me, great Soldan.'

'Nay, if thou hast actual wrong to complain of,' said Saladin, 'fool or wise, thou art entitled to the ear of a king. Retire hither with me'; and he led him into the inner tent.

Whatever their conference related to, it was soon broken off by the fanfare of the trumpets, announcing the arrival of the various Christian princes, whom Saladin welcomed to his tent with a royal courtesy well becoming their rank and his own, but chiefly he saluted the young Earl of Huntingdon, and generously congratulated him upon prospects which seemed to have interfered with and overclouded those which he had himself entertained.

'But think not,' said the Soldan, 'thou noble youth, that the Prince of Scotland is more welcome to Saladin than was Kenneth to the solitary Ilderim when they met in the desert, or the distressed Ethiop to the Hakim Adonbec. A brave and generous disposition like thine hath a value independent of condition and birth, as the cool draught which I here proffer thee is as delicious from an earthen vessel as from a goblet of gold.'

The Earl of Huntingdon made a suitable reply, gratefully acknowledging the various important services he had received from the generous Soldan; but when he had pledged Saladin in the bowl of sherbet which the Soldan had proffered to him, he could not help remarking with a smile, 'The brave cavalier, Ilderim, knew not of the formation of ice, but the munificent Soldan cools his sherbet with snow.'

'Wouldst thou have an Arab or a Kurdman as wise as a

Hakim?' said the Soldan. 'He who does on a disguise must make the sentiments of his heart and the learning of his head accord with the dress which he assumes. I desired to see how a brave and single-hearted cavalier of Frangistan would conduct himself in debate with such a chief as I then seemed; and I questioned the truth of a well-known fact, to know by what arguments thou wouldst support thy assertion.'

While they were speaking, the Archduke of Austria, who stood a little apart, was struck with the mention of iced sherbet, and took with pleasure and some bluntness the deep goblet, as the Earl of Huntingdon was about to replace it.

'Most delicious!' he exclaimed, after a deep draught, which the heat of the weather, and the feverishness following the debauch of the preceding day, had rendered doubly acceptable. He sighed as he handed the cup to the Grand Master of the Templars. Saladin made a sign to the dwarf, who advanced and pronounced, with a harsh voice, the words, '*Accipe hoc!*' The Templar started, like a steed who sees a lion under a bush beside the pathway; yet instantly recovered, and to hide, perhaps, his confusion, raised the goblet to his lips; but those lips never touched that goblet's rim. The sabre of Saladin left its sheath as lightning leaves the cloud. It was waved in the air, and the head of the Grand Master rolled to the extremity of the tent, while the trunk remained for a second standing, with the goblet still clenched in its grasp, then fell, the liquor mingling with the blood that spurted from the veins.[1]

There was a general exclamation of 'Treason,' and Austria, nearest to whom Saladin stood with the bloody sabre in his hand, started back as if apprehensive that his turn was to come next. Richard and others laid hand on their swords.

'Fear nothing, noble Austria,' said Saladin, as composedly as if nothing had happened, 'nor you, royal England, be wroth at what you have seen. Not for his manifold treasons; not for the attempt which, as may be vouched by his own squire, he instigated against King Richard's life; not that he pursued the Prince of Scotland and myself in the desert, reducing us to save our lives by the speed of our horses; not that he had stirred up the Maronites to attack us upon this very occasion, had I not brought up unexpectedly so many Arabs as rendered the scheme abortive — not for any or all of these crimes does he now lie there, although each were deserving such a doom; but because, scarce half an hour ere he polluted our presence, as

[1] See Death of Grand Master. Note 11.

the simoom empoisons the atmosphere, he poniarded his comrade and accomplice, Conrade of Montserrat, lest he should confess the infamous plots in which they had both been engaged.'

'How! Conrade murdered! And by the Grand Master, his sponsor and most intimate friend!' exclaimed Richard. 'Noble Soldan, I would not doubt thee; yet this must be proved, otherwise ——'

'There stands the evidence,' said Saladin, pointing to the terrified dwarf. 'Allah, who sends the firefly to illuminate the night-season, can discover secret crimes by the most contemptible means.'

The Soldan proceeded to tell the dwarf's story, which amounted to this: — In his foolish curiosity, or, as he partly confessed, with some thoughts of pilfering, Nectabanus had strayed into the tent of Conrade, which had been deserted by his attendants, some of whom had left the encampment to carry the news of his defeat to his brother, and others were availing themselves of the means which Saladin had supplied for revelling. The wounded man slept under the influence of Saladin's wonderful talisman, so that the dwarf had opportunity to pry about at pleasure, until he was frightened into concealment by the sound of a heavy step. He skulked behind a curtain, yet could see the motions, and hear the words, of the Grand Master, who entered, and carefully secured the covering of the pavilion behind him. His victim started from sleep, and it would appear that he instantly suspected the purpose of his old associate, for it was in a tone of alarm that he demanded wherefore he disturbed him.

'I come to confess and to absolve thee,' answered the Grand Master.

Of their further speech the terrified dwarf remembered little, save that Conrade implored the Grand Master not to break a wounded reed, and that the Templar struck him to the heart with a Turkish dagger, with the words '*Accipe hoc*' — words which long afterwards haunted the terrified imagination of the concealed witness.

'I verified the tale,' said Saladin, 'by causing the body to be examined; and I made this unhappy being, whom Allah hath made the discoverer of the crime, repeat in your own presence the words which the murderer spoke: and you yourselves saw the effect which they produced upon his conscience.'

The Soldan paused; and the King of England broke silence:

'If this be true, as I doubt not, we have witnessed a great act of justice, though it bore a different aspect. But wherefore in this presence? wherefore with thine own hand?'

'I had designed otherwise,' said Saladin; 'but, had I not hastened his doom, it had been altogether averted, since, if I had permitted him to taste of my cup, as he was about to do, how could I, without incurring the brand of inhospitality, have done him to death as he deserved? Had he murdered my father, and afterwards partaken of my food and my bowl, not a hair of his head could have been injured by me. But enough of him — let his carcass and his memory be removed from amongst us.'

The body was carried away, and the marks of the slaughter obliterated or concealed with such ready dexterity as showed that the case was not altogether so uncommon as to paralyse the assistants and officers of Saladin's household.

But the Christian princes felt that the scene which they had beheld weighed heavily on their spirits, and although, at the courteous invitation of the Soldan, they assumed their seats at the banquet, yet it was with the silence of doubt and amazement. The spirits of Richard alone surmounted all cause for suspicion or embarrassment. Yet he, too, seemed to ruminate on some proposition, as if he were desirous of making it in the most insinuating and acceptable manner which was possible. At length he drank off a large bowl of wine, and, addressing the Soldan, desired to know whether it was not true that he had honoured the Earl of Huntingdon with a personal encounter.

Saladin answered with a smile, that he had proved his horse and his weapons with the heir of Scotland, as cavaliers are wont to do with each other when they meet in the desert; and modestly added that, though the combat was not entirely decisive, he had not, on his part, much reason to pride himself on the event. The Scot, on the other hand, disclaimed the attributed superiority, and wished to assign it to the Soldan.

'Enough of honour thou hast had in the encounter,' said Richard, 'and I envy thee more for that than for the smiles of Edith Plantagenet, though one of them might reward a bloody day's work. But what say you, noble princes; is it fitting that such a royal ring of chivalry should break up without something being done for future times to speak of? What is the overthrow and death of a traitor to such a fair garland of honour as is here assembled, and which ought not to part without witnessing something more worthy of their regard? How say you, princely Soldan? What if we two should now,

and before this fair company, decide the long-contested question for this land of Palestine, and end at once these tedious wars? Yonder are the lists ready, nor can Paynimie ever hope a better champion than thou. I, unless worthier offers, will lay down my gauntlet in behalf of Christendom, and, in all love and honour, we will do mortal battle for the possession of Jerusalem.'

There was a deep pause for the Soldan's answer. His cheek and brow coloured highly, and it was the opinion of many present that he hesitated whether he should accept the challenge. At length he said, 'Fighting for the Holy City against those whom we regard as idolaters, and worshippers of stocks and stones and graven images, I might confide that Allah would strengthen my arm; or if I fell beneath the sword of the Melech Ric, I could not pass to Paradise by a more glorious death. But Allah has already given Jerusalem to the true believers, and it were a tempting the God of the Prophet to peril, upon my own personal strength and skill, that which I hold securely by the superiority of my forces.'

'If not for Jerusalem, then,' said Richard, in the tone of one who would entreat a favour of an intimate friend, 'yet for the love of honour, let us run at least three courses with grinded lances?'

'Even this,' said Saladin, half-smiling at Cœur-de-Lion's affectionate earnestness for the combat — 'even this I may not lawfully do. The master places the shepherd over the flock, not for the shepherd's own sake, but for the sake of the sheep. Had I a son to hold the sceptre when I fell, I might have had the liberty, as I have the will, to brave this bold encounter; but your own Scripture sayeth, that when the herdsman is smitten, the sheep are scattered.'

'Thou hast had all the fortune,' said Richard, turning to the Earl of Huntingdon, with a sigh. 'I would have given the best year in my life for that one half-hour beside the Diamond of the Desert!'

The chivalrous extravagance of Richard awakened the spirits of the assembly, and when at length they arose to depart, Saladin advanced and took Cœur-de-Lion by the hand.

'Noble King of England,' he said, 'we now part never to meet again. That your league is dissolved, no more to be reunited, and that your native forces are far too few to enable you to prosecute your enterprise, is as well known to me as to yourself. I may not yield you up that Jerusalem which you so

much desire to hold. It is to us, as to you, a Holy City. But whatever other terms Richard demands of Saladin shall be as willingly yielded as yonder fountain yields its waters. Ay, and the same should be as frankly afforded by Saladin if Richard stood in the desert with but two archers in his train.'

The next day saw Richard's return to his own camp, and in a short space afterwards the young Earl of Huntingdon was espoused by Edith Plantagenet. The Soldan sent, as a nuptial present on this occasion, the celebrated TALISMAN; but though many cures were wrought by means of it in Europe, none equalled in success and celebrity those which the Soldan achieved. It is still in existence, having been bequeathed by the Earl of Huntingdon to a brave knight of Scotland, Sir Simon of the Lee, in whose ancient and highly-honoured family it is still preserved; and although charmed stones have been dismissed from the modern pharmacopœia, its virtues are still applied to for stopping blood and in cases of canine madness.

Our story closes here, as the terms on which Richard relinquished his conquests are to be found in every history of the period.

CHRONICLES OF THE CANONGATE

FIRST SERIES

(Continued)

INTRODUCTORY

Mr. Croftangry Introduces Another Tale

Together both on the high lawns appeared.
Under the opening eyelids of the morn
They drove afield.

Elegy on Lycidas.

I HAVE sometimes wondered why all the favourite occupations and pastimes of mankind go to the disturbance of that happy state of tranquillity, that *otium*, as Horace terms it, which he says is the object of all men's prayers, whether preferred from sea or land; and that the undisturbed repose, of which we are so tenacious when duty or necessity compels us to abandon it, is precisely what we long to exchange for a state of excitation, as soon as we may prolong it at our own pleasure. Briefly, you have only to say to a man, 'remain at rest,' and you instantly inspire the love of labour. The sportsman toils like his gamekeeper, the master of the pack takes as severe exercise as his whipper-in, the statesman or politician drudges more than the professional lawyer; and, to come to my own case, the volunteer author subjects himself to the risk of painful criticism, and the assured certainty of mental and manual labour, just as completely as his needy brother, whose necessities compel him to assume the pen.

These reflections have been suggested by an annunciation on the part of Janet, 'That the little gillie-whitefoot was come from the printing-office.'

'Gillie-blackfoot you should call him, Janet,' was my response, 'for he is neither more nor less than an imp of the devil, come to torment me for "copy," for so the printers call a supply of manuscript for the press.'

'Now, Cot forgie your honour,' said Janet; 'for it is no like your ainsell to give such names to a faitherless bairn.'

'I have got nothing else to give him, Janet; he must wait a little.'

'Then I have got some breakfast to give the bit gillie,' said Janet; 'and he can wait by the fireside in the kitchen till your honour 's ready; and good enough for the like of him, if he was to wait your honour's pleasure all day.'

'But, Janet,' said I to my little active superintendent, on her return to the parlour, after having made her hospitable arrangements, 'I begin to find this writing our Chronicles is rather more tiresome than I expected, for here comes this little fellow to ask for manuscript — that is, for something to print — and I have got none to give him.'

'Your honour can be at nae loss; I have seen you write fast and fast enough; and for subjects, you have the whole Highlands to write about, and I am sure you know a hundred tales better than that about Hamish MacTavish, for it was but about a young cateran and an auld carline, when all 's done; and if they had burned the rudas queau for a witch, I am thinking, maybe, they would not have tyned their coals, and her to gar her neer-do-weel son shoot a gentleman Cameron! I am third cousin to the Camerons mysell; my blood warms to them. And if you want to write about deserters, I am sure there were deserters enough on the top of Arthur's Seat, when the Mac-Raes broke out, and on that woeful day beside Leith Pier — ohonari!'

Here Janet began to weep, and to wipe her eyes with her apron. For my part, the idea I wanted was supplied, but I hesitated to make use of it. Topics, like times, are apt to become common by frequent use. It is only an ass!' Justice Shallow who would pitch upon 'the over-scutched tunes which the carmen whistled' and try to pass them off as his 'fancies and his good-nights.' Now, the Highlands, though formerly a rich mine for original matter, are, as my friend Mrs. Bethune Baliol warned me, in some degree worn out by the incessant labour of modern romancers and novelists, who, finding in those remote regions primitive habits and manners, have vainly imagined that the public can never tire of them; and so kilted Highlanders are to be found as frequently, and nearly of as genuine descent, on the shelves of a circulating library as at a Caledonian ball. Much might have been made at an earlier time out of the history of a Highland regiment, and the singular revolution of ideas which must have taken place in the minds of those who composed it, when exchanging their native hills for the battle-fields of the continent, and their simple, and sometimes indolent, domestic habits for the regular exertions

demanded by modern discipline. But the market is forestalled. There is Mrs. Grant of Laggan, has drawn the manners, customs, and superstitions of the mountains in their natural, unsophisticated state;[1] and my friend, General Stewart of Garth,[2] in giving the real history of the Highland regiments, has rendered any attempt to fill up the sketch with fancy-colouring extremely rash and precarious. Yet I, too, have still a lingering fancy to add a stone to the cairn; and without calling in imagination to aid the impressions of juvenile recollection, I may just attempt to embody one or two scenes illustrative of the Highland character, and which belong peculiarly to the Chronicles of the Canongate, to the greyheaded eld of whom they are as familiar as to Chrystal Croftangry. Yet I will not go back to the days of clanship and claymores. Have at you, gentle reader, with a tale of Two Drovers. An oyster may be crossed in love, says the gentle Tilburina, and a drover may be touched on a point of honour, says the Chronicler of the Canongate.

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[1] *Letters from the Mountains* [1773-1803]. *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders* [1811]. *The Highlanders, and other Poems* [1803], etc.

[2] The gallant and amiable author of the *History of the Highland Regiments* [i.e. *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland, with Details of the Military Service of the Highland Regiments*, 1822], in whose glorious services his own share had been great, went out Governor of St. Lucia in 1828, and died in that island on the 18th of December 1829, no man more regretted, or perhaps by a wider circle of friends and acquaintance.

THE TWO DROVERS

THE TWO DROVERS

CHAPTER I

IT was the day after Doune Fair when my story commences. It had been a brisk market: several dealers had attended from the northern and midland counties in England, and English money had flown so merrily about as to gladden the hearts of the Highland farmers. Many large droves were about to set off for England, under the protection of their owners, or of the topsmen whom they employed in the tedious, laborious, and responsible office of driving the cattle for many hundred miles, from the market where they had been purchased to the fields or farm-yards where they were to be fattened for the shambles.

The Highlanders in particular are masters of this difficult trade of driving, which seems to suit them as well as the trade of war. It affords exercise for all their habits of patient endurance and active exertion. They are required to know perfectly the drove-roads, which lie over the wildest tracts of the country, and to avoid as much as possible the highways, which distress the feet of the bullocks, and the turnpikes, which annoy the spirit of the drover; whereas on the broad green or grey track, which leads across the pathless moor, the herd not only move at ease and without taxation, but, if they mind their business, may pick up a mouthful of food by the way. At night, the drovers usually sleep along with their cattle, let the weather be what it will; and many of these hardy men do not once rest under a roof during a journey on foot from Lochaber to Lincolnshire. They are paid very highly, for the trust reposed is of the last importance, as it depends on their prudence, vigilance, and honesty whether the cattle reach the final market in good order, and afford a profit to the grazier.

But, as they maintain themselves at their own expense, they are especially economical in that particular. At the period we speak of, a Highland drover was victualled for his long and toilsome journey with a few handfuls of oatmeal and two or three onions, renewed from time to time, and a ram's horn filled with whisky, which he used regularly, but sparingly, every night and morning. His dirk, or *skene-dhu* (*i.e.* black knife), so worn as to be concealed beneath the arm, or by the folds of the plaid, was his only weapon, excepting the cudgel with which he directed the movements of the cattle. A Highlander was never so happy as on these occasions. There was a variety in the whole journey which exercised the Celt's natural curiosity and love of motion; there were the constant change of place and scene, the petty adventures incidental to the traffic, and the intercourse with the various farmers, graziers, and traders, intermingled with occasional merry makings, not the less acceptable to Donald that they were void of expense; and there was the consciousness of superior skill: for the Highlander, a child amongst flocks, is a prince amongst herds, and his natural habits induce him to disdain the shepherd's slothful life, so that he feels himself nowhere more at home than when following a gallant drove of his country cattle in the character of their guardian.

Of the number who left Doune in the morning, and with the purpose we have described, not a *glunamie* of them all cocked his bonnet more briskly, or gartered his tartan hose under knee over a pair of more promising *spiogs* (legs), than did Robin Oig M'Combich, called familiarly Robin Oig, that is, Young, or the Lesser, Robin. Though small of stature, as the epithet Oig implies, and not very strongly limbed, he was as light and alert as one of the deer of his mountains. He had an elasticity of step which, in the course of a long march, made many a stout fellow envy him; and the manner in which he busked his plaid and adjusted his bonnet argued a consciousness that so smart a John Highlandman as himself would not pass unnoticed among the Lowland lasses. The ruddy cheek, red lips, and white teeth set off a countenance which had gained by exposure to the weather a healthful and hardy rather than a rugged hue. If Robin Oig did not laugh, or even smile, frequently, as indeed is not the practice among his countrymen, his bright eyes usually gleamed from under his bonnet with an expression of cheerfulness ready to be turned into mirth.

The departure of Robin Oig was an incident in the little

town, in and near which he had many friends, male and female. He was a topping person in his way, transacted considerable business on his own behalf, and was entrusted by the best farmers in the Highlands, in preference to any other drover in that district. He might have increased his business to any extent had he condescended to manage it by deputy; but, except a lad or two, sister's sons of his own, Robin rejected the idea of assistance, conscious, perhaps, how much his reputation depended upon his attending in person to the practical discharge of his duty in every instance. He remained, therefore, contented with the highest premium given to persons of his description, and comforted himself with the hopes that a few journeys to England might enable him to conduct business on his own account in a manner becoming his birth. For Robin Oig's father, Lachlan M'Combich, or 'son of my friend' (his actual clan-surname being M'Gregor), had been so called by the celebrated Rob Roy, because of the particular friendship which had subsisted between the grandsire of Robin and that renowned cateran. Some people even say that Robin Oig derived his Christian name from one as renowned in the wilds of Loch Lomond as ever was his namesake, Robin Hood, in the precincts of merry Sherwood. 'Of such ancestry,' as James Boswell says, 'who would not be proud?' Robin Oig was proud accordingly; but his frequent visits to England and to the Lowlands had given him tact enough to know that pretensions which still gave him a little right to distinction in his own lonely glen might be both obnoxious and ridiculous if preferred elsewhere. The pride of birth, therefore, was like the miser's treasure, the secret subject of his contemplation, but never exhibited to strangers as a subject of boasting.

Many were the words of gratulation and good-luck which were bestowed on Robin Oig. The judges commended his drove, especially Robin's own property, which were the best of them. Some thrust out their snuff-mulls for the parting pinch; others tendered the *doch-an-dorroch*, or parting-cup. All cried —'Good-luck travel out with you and come home with you. Give you luck in the Saxon market — brave notes in the *leabhardhu* (black pocket-book) and plenty of English gold in the *sporran*' (pouch of goat-skin).

The bonny lasses made their adieus more modestly, and more than one, it was said, would have given her best brooch to be certain that it was upon her that his eye last rested as he turned towards the road.

Robin Oig had just given the preliminary 'Hoo — hoo!' to urge forward the loiterers of the drove, when there was a cry behind him.

'Stay, Robin — bide a blink. Here is Janet of Tomahourich — auld Janet, your father's sister.'

'Plague on her, for an auld Highland witch and spaewife,' said a farmer from the Carse of Stirling; 'she 'll cast some of her cantrips on the cattle.'

'She canna do that,' said another sapient of the same profession: 'Robin Oig is no the lad to leave any of them without tying St. Mungo's knot on their tails, and that will put to her speed the best witch that ever flew over Dimayet upon a broomstick.'

It may not be indifferent to the reader to know that the Highland cattle are peculiarly liable to be 'taken,' or infected, by spells and witchcraft, which judicious people guard against by knitting knots of peculiar complexity on the tuft of hair which terminates the animal's tail.

But the old woman who was the object of the farmer's suspicion seemed only busied about the drover, without paying any attention to the drove. Robin, on the contrary, appeared rather impatient of her presence.

'What auld-world fancy,' he said, 'has brought you so early from the ingle-side this morning, muhme? I am sure I bid you good-even, and had your God-speed, last night.'

'And left me more siller than the useless old woman will use till you come back again, bird of my bosom,' said the sibyl. 'But it is little I would care for the food that nourishes me, or the fire that warms me, or for God's blessed sun itself, if aught but weal should happen to the grandson of my father. So let me walk the *deasil* round you, that you may go safe out into the far foreign land, and come safe home.'

Robin Oig stopped, half-embarrassed, half-laughing, and signing to those around that he only complied with the old woman to soothe her humour. In the meantime, she traced around him, with wavering steps, the propitiation, which some have thought has been derived from the Druidical mythology. It consists, as is well known, in the person who makes the *deasil* walking three times round the person who is the object of the ceremony, taking care to move according to the course of the sun. At once, however, she stopped short, and exclaimed, in a voice of alarm and horror, 'Grandson of my father, there is blood on your hand.'

'Hush, for God's sake, aunt,' said Robin Oig; 'you will bring

more trouble on yourself with this *taishataragh* (second sight) than you will be able to get out of for many a day.'

The old woman only repeated, with a ghastly look, 'There is blood on your hand, and it is English blood. The blood of the Gael is richer and redder. Let us see — let us ——'

Ere Robin Oig could prevent her, which, indeed, could only have been by positive violence, so hasty and peremptory were her proceedings, she had drawn from his side the dirk which lodged in the folds of his plaid, and held it up, exclaiming, although the weapon gleamed clear and bright in the sun, 'Blood, blood — Saxon blood again. Robin Oig M'Combich, go not this day to England!'

'Prutt, trutt,' answered Robin Oig, 'that will never do neither; it would be next thing to running the country. For shame, muhme, give me the dirk. You cannot tell by the colour the difference betwixt the blood of a black bullock and a white one, and you speak of knowing Saxon from Gaelic blood. All men have their blood from Adam, muhme. Give me my skene-dhu, and let me go on my road. I should have been half-way to Stirling brig by this time. Give me my dirk, and let me go.'

'Never will I give it to you,' said the old woman — 'never will I quit my hold on your plaid, unless you promise me not to wear that unhappy weapon.'

The women around him urged him also, saying, few of his aunt's words fell to the ground; and as the Lowland farmers continued to look moodily on the scene, Robin Oig determined to close it at any sacrifice.

'Well, then,' said the young drover, giving the scabbard of the weapon to Hugh Morrison, 'you Lowlanders care nothing for these freats. Keep my dirk for me. I cannot give it you, because it was my father's; but your drove follows ours, and I am content it should be in your keeping, not in mine. Will this do, muhme?'

'It must,' said the old woman — 'that is, if the Lowlander is mad enough to carry the knife.'

The strong Westlandman laughed aloud.

'Goodwife,' said he, 'I am Hugh Morrison from Glenae, come of the Manly Morrisons of auld langsyne, that never took short weapon against a man in their lives. And neither needed they: they had their broadswords, and I have this bit supple,' showing a formidable cudgel; 'for dirking ower the board, I leave that to John Highlandman. Ye needna snort, none of you Highlanders, and you in especial, Robin. I'll keep the bit

knife, if you are feared for the auld spaewife's tale, and give it back to you whenever you want it.'

Robin was not particularly pleased with some part of Hugh Morrison's speech; but he had learned in his travels more patience than belonged to his Highland constitution originally, and he accepted the service of the descendant of the Manly Morrisons, without finding fault with the rather depreciating manner in which it was offered.

'If he had not had his morning in his head, and been but a Dumfriesshire hog into the boot, he would have spoken more like a gentleman. But you cannot have more of a sow than a grumph. It's shame my father's knife should ever slash a haggis for the like of him.'

Thus saying, but saying it in Gaelic, Robin drove on his cattle, and waved farewell to all behind him. He was in the greater haste, because he expected to join at Falkirk a comrade and brother in profession, with whom he proposed to travel in company.

Robin Oig's chosen friend was a young Englishman, Harry Wakefield by name, well known at every northern market, and in his way as much famed and honoured as our Highland driver of bullocks. He was nearly six feet high, gallantly formed to keep the rounds at Smithfield, or maintain the ring at a wrestling-match; and although he might have been overmatched, perhaps, among the regular professors of the fancy, yet, as a yokel or rustic, or a chance customer, he was able to give a bellyful to any amateur of the pugilistic art. Doncaster races saw him in his glory, betting his guinea, and generally successfully; nor was there a main fought in Yorkshire, the feeders being persons of celebrity, at which he was not to be seen, if business permitted. But though a 'sprack' lad, and fond of pleasure and its haunts, Harry Wakefield was steady, and not the cautious Robin Oig M'Combich himself was more attentive to the main chance. His holidays were holidays indeed; but his days of work were dedicated to steady and persevering labour. In countenance and temper, Wakefield was the model of Old England's merry yeomen, whose clothyard shafts, in so many hundred battles, asserted her superiority over the nations, and whose good sabres, in our own time, are her cheapest and most assured defence. His mirth was readily excited; for, strong in limb and constitution, and fortunate in circumstances, he was disposed to be pleased with everything about him; and such difficulties as he might occasionally encounter were, to a

man of his energy, rather matter of amusement than serious annoyance. With all the merits of a sanguine temper, our young English drover was not without his defects. He was irascible, sometimes to the verge of being quarrelsome; and perhaps not the less inclined to bring his disputes to a pugilistic decision, because he found few antagonists able to stand up to him in the boxing-ring.

It is difficult to say how Harry Wakefield and Robin Oig first became intimates; but it is certain a close acquaintance had taken place betwixt them, although they had apparently few common subjects of conversation or of interest, so soon as their talk ceased to be of bullocks. Robin Oig, indeed, spoke the English language rather imperfectly upon any other topics but stots and kyloes, and Harry Wakefield could never bring his broad Yorkshire tongue to utter a single word of Gaelic. It was in vain Robin spent a whole morning, during a walk over Minch Moor, in attempting to teach his companion to utter, with true precision, the shibboleth *lhu*, which is the Gaelic for a calf. From Traquair to Murder cairn, the hill rung with the discordant at _npts of the Saxon upon the unmanageable monosyllable, and the heartfelt laugh which followed every failure. They had, however, better modes of awakening the echoes; for Wakefield could sing many a ditty to the praise of Moll, Susan, and Cicely, and Robin Oig had a particular gift at whistling interminable pibrochs through all their involutions, and, what was more agreeable to his companion's southern ear, knew many of the northern airs, both lively and pathetic, to which Wakefield learned to pipe a bass. Thus, though Robin could hardly have comprehended his companion's stories about horse-racing, and cock-fighting, or fox-hunting, and although his own legends of clan-fights and creaghs, varied with talk of Highland goblins and fairy folk, would have been caviare to his companion, they contrived nevertheless to find a degree of pleasure in each other's company, which had for three years back induced them to join company and travel together, when the direction of their journey permitted. Each, indeed, found his advantage in this companionship; for where could the Englishman have found a guide through the Western Highlands like Robin Oig M'Combich? and when they were on what Harry called the *right* side of the Border, his patronage, which was extensive, and his purse, which was heavy, were at all times at the service of his Highland friend, and on many occasions his liberality did him genuine yeoman's service.

CHAPTER II

Were ever two such loving friends!—
How could they disagree!
O thus it was, he loved him dear,
And thought how to requite him,
And having no friend left but he,
He did resolve to fight him.

Duke upon Duke.

THE pair of friends had traversed with their usual cordiality the grassy wilds of Liddesdale, and crossed the opposite part of Cumberland, emphatically called The Waste. In these solitary regions the cattle under the charge of our drovers derived their subsistence chiefly by picking their food as they went along the drove-road, or sometimes by the tempting opportunity of a 'start and owerloup,' or invasion of the neighbouring pasture, where an occasion presented itself. But now the scene changed before them; they were descending towards a fertile and inclosed country, where no such liberties could be taken with impunity, or without a previous arrangement and bargain with the possessors of the ground. This was more especially the case, as a great northern fair was upon the eve of taking place, where both the Scotch and English drover expected to dispose of a part of their cattle, which it was desirable to produce in the market rested and in good order. Fields were therefore difficult to be obtained, and only upon high terms. This necessity occasioned a temporary separation betwixt the two friends, who went to bargain, each as he could, for the separate accommodation of his herd. Unhappily it chanced that both of them, unknown to each other, thought of bargaining for the ground they wanted on the property of a country gentleman of some fortune, whose estate lay in the neighbourhood. The English drover applied to the bailiff on the property, who was known to him. It chanced that the Cumbrian squire, who had entertained some suspicions of his manager's honesty, was taking occasional measures to ascertain

how far they were well founded, and had desired that any inquiries about his inclosures, with a view to occupy them for a temporary purpose, should be referred to himself. As, however, Mr. Ireby had gone the day before upon a journey of some miles' distance to the northward, the bailiff chose to consider the check upon his full powers as for the time removed, and concluded that he should best consult his master's interest, and perhaps his own, in making an agreement with Harry Wakefield.

Meanwhile, ignorant of what his comrade was doing, Robin Oig, on his side, chanced to be overtaken by a good-looking, smart little man upon a pony, most knowingly hogged and cropped, as was then the fashion, the rider wearing tight leather breeches and long-necked bright spurs. This cavalier asked one or two pertinent questions about markets and the price of stock. So Robin, seeing him a well-judging, civil gentleman, took the freedom to ask him whether he could let him know if there was any grass-land to be let in that neighbourhood, for the temporary accommodation of his drove. He could not have put the question to more willing ears. The gentleman of the buckskins was the proprietor with whose bailiff Harry Wakefield had dealt, or was in the act of dealing.

'Thou art in good luck, my canny Scot,' said Mr. Ireby, 'to have spoken to me, for I see thy cattle have done their day's work, and I have at my disposal the only field within three miles that is to be let in these parts.'

'The drove can pe gang two, three, four miles very pratty weel indeed,' said the cautious Highlander; 'put what would his honour pe axing for the peasts pe the head, if she was to tak the park for twa or three days?'

'We won't differ, Sawney, if you let me have six stots for winterers, in the way of reason.'

'And which peasts wad your honour pe for having?'

'Why, let me see — the two black — the dun one — yon doddy — him with the twisted horn — the brockit. How much by the head?'

'Ah,' said Robin, 'your honour is a shudge — a real shudge: I couldna have set off the pest six peasts petter mysell, me that ken them as if they were my pairns, puir things.'

'Well, how much per head, Sawney,' continued Mr. Ireby.

'It was high markets at Doune and Falkirk,' answered Robin.

And thus the conversation proceeded, until they had agreed on the *prix juste* for the bullocks, the squire throwing in the

temporary accommodation of the inclosure for the cattle into the boot, and Robin making, as he thought, a very good bargain, provided the grass was but tolerable. The squire walked his pony alongside of the drove, partly to show him the way, and see him put into possession of the field, and partly to learn the latest news of the northern markets.

They arrived at the field, and the pasture seemed excellent. But what was their surprise when they saw the bailiff quietly inducting the cattle of Harry Wakefield into the grassy Goshen which had just been assigned to those of Robin Oig M'Combich by the proprietor himself! Squire Ireby set spurs to his horse, dashed up to his servant, and learning what had passed between the parties, briefly informed the English drover that his bailiff had let the ground without his authority, and that he might seek grass for his cattle wherever he would, since he was to get none there. At the same time he rebuked his servant severely for having transgressed his commands, and ordered him instantly to assist in ejecting the hungry and weary cattle of Harry Wakefield, which were just beginning to enjoy a meal of unusual plenty, and to introduce those of his comrade, whom the English drover now began to consider as a rival.

The feelings which arose in Wakefield's mind would have induced him to resist Mr. Ireby's decision; but every Englishman has a tolerably accurate sense of law and justice, and John Fleecebumpkin, the bailiff, having acknowledged that he had exceeded his commission, Wakefield saw nothing else for it than to collect his hungry and disappointed charge, and drive them on to seek quarters elsewhere. Robin Oig saw what had happened with regret, and hastened to offer to his English friend to share with him the disputed possession. But Wakefield's pride was severely hurt, and he answered disdainfully, 'Take it all, man — take it all; never make two bites of a cherry. Thou canst talk over the gentry, and blear a plain man's eye. Out upon you, man; I would not kiss any man's dirty latchets for leave to bake in his oven.'

Robin Oig, sorry but not surprised at his comrade's displeasure, hastened to entreat his friend to wait but an hour till he had gone to the squire's house to receive payment for the cattle he had sold, and he would come back and help him to drive the cattle into some convenient place of rest, and explain to him the whole mistake they had both of them fallen into.

But the Englishman continued indignant. 'Thou hast been selling, hast thou? Ay — ay, thou is a cunning lad for kenning

the hours of bargaining. Go to the devil with thyself, for I will ne'er see thy fause loon's visage again; thou should be ashamed to look me in the face.'

'I am ashamed to look no man in the face,' said Robin Oig, something moved; 'and, moreover, I will look you in the face this blessed day, if you will bide at the clachan down yonder.'

'Mayhap you had as well keep away,' said his comrade; and turning his back on his former friend, he collected his unwilling associates, assisted by the bailiff, who took some real and some affected interest in seeing Wakefield accommodated.

After spending some time in negotiating with more than one of the neighbouring farmers, who could not, or would not, afford the accommodation desired, Henry Wakefield at last, and in his necessity, accomplished his point by means of the landlord of the alehouse at which Robin Oig and he had agreed to pass the night, when they first separated from each other. Mine host was content to let him turn his cattle on a piece of barren moor, at a price little less than the bailiff had asked for the disputed inclosure; and the wretchedness of the pasture, as well as the price paid for it, were set down as exaggerations of the breach of faith and friendship of his Scottish crony. This turn of Wakefield's passions was encouraged by the bailiff, who had his own reasons for being offended against poor Robin, as having been the unwitting cause of his falling into disgrace with his master, as well as by the innkeeper, and two or three chance guests, who stimulated the drover in his resentment against his quondam associate — some from the ancient grudge against the Scots, which, when it exists anywhere, is to be found lurking in the Border counties, and some from the general love of mischief, which characterises mankind in all ranks of life, to the honour of Adam's children be it spoken. Good John Barleycorn also, who always heightens and exaggerates the prevailing passions, be they angry or kindly, was not wanting in his offices on this occasion; and confusion to false friends and hard masters was pledged in more than one tankard.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Ireby found some amusement in detaining the northern drover at his ancient hall. He caused a cold round of beef to be placed before the Scot in the butler's pantry, together with a foaming tankard of home-brewed, and took pleasure in seeing the hearty appetite with which these unwonted edibles were discussed by Robin Oig M'Combich. The squire himself, lighting his pipe, compounded between his

patrician dignity and his love of agricultural gossip, by walking up and down while he conversed with his guest.

'I passed another drove,' said the squire, 'with one of your countrymen behind them; they were something less beasts than your drove, doddies most of them; a big man was with them — none of your kilts though, but a decent pair of breeches. D' ye know who he may be?'

'Hout aye, that might, could, and would be Hughie Morrison; I didna think he could hae been sae weel up. He has made a day on us; but his Argyleshires will have wearied shanks. How far was he behind?'

'I think about six or seven miles,' answered the squire, 'for I passed them at the Christenbury Crag, and I overtook you at the Hollan Bush. If his beasts be leg-weary, he will be maybe selling bargains.'

'Na — na, Hughie Morrison is no the man for pargains; ye maun come to some Highland body like Robin Oig hersell for the like of these. Put I maun pe wishing you goot-night, and twenty of them let alane ane, and I maun down to the clachan to see if the lad Harry Waakfelt is out of his humdudgeons yet.'

The party at the alehouse were still in full talk, and the treachery of Robin Oig still the theme of conversation, when the supposed culprit entered the apartment. His arrival, as usually happens in such a case, put an instant stop to the discussion of which he had furnished the subject, and he was received by the company assembled with that chilling silence which, more than a thousand exclamations, tells an intruder that he is unwelcome. Surprised and offended, but not appalled, by the reception which he experienced, Robin entered with an undaunted and even a haughty air, attempted no greeting, as he saw he was received with none, and placed himself by the side of the fire, a little apart from a table at which Harry Wakefield, the bailiff, and two or three other persons were seated. The ample Cumbrian kitchen would have afforded plenty of room, even for a larger separation.

Robin, thus seated, proceeded to light his pipe and call for a pint of twopenny.

'We have no twopence ale,' answered Ralph Heskett, the landlord; 'but, as thou find'st thy own tobacco, it 's like thou mayst find thy own liquor too; it 's the wont of thy country, I wot.'

'Shame, goodman,' said the landlady, a blythe, bustling

housewife, hastening herself to supply the guest with liquor. 'Thou knowest well enow what the strange man wants, and it 's thy trade to be civil, man. Thou shouldst know, that if the Scot likes a small pot, he pays a sure penny.'

Without taking any notice of this nuptial dialogue, the Highlander took the flagon in his hand, and addressing the company generally, drank the interesting toast of 'Good markets,' to the party assembled.

'The better that the wind blew fewer dealers from the north,' said one of the farmers, 'and fewer Highland runts to eat up the English meadows.'

'Saul of my body, put you are wrang there, my friend,' answered Robin, with composure; 'it is your fat Englishmen that eat up our Scots cattle, puir things.'

'I wish there was a summat to eat up their drovers,' said another; 'a plain Englishman canna make bread within a kenning of them.'

'Or an honest servant keep his master's favour, but they will come sliding in between him and the sunshine,' said the bailiff.

'If these pe jokes,' said Robin Oig, with the same composure, 'there is ower mony jokes upon one man.'

'It is no joke, but downright earnest,' said the bailiff. 'Harkye, Mr. Robin Ogg, or whatever is your name, it 's right we should tell you that we are all of one opinion, and that is, that you, Mr. Robin Ogg, have behaved to our friend, Mr. Harry Wakefield here, like a raff and a blackguard.'

'Nae doubt — nae doubt,' answered Robin, with great composure; 'and you are a set of very pretty judges, for whose prains or pehaviour I wad not gie a pinch of sneeshing. If Mr. Harry Waakfelt kens where he is wranged, he kens where he may be righted.'

'He speaks truth,' said Wakefield, who had listened to what passed, divided between the offence which he had taken at Robin's late behaviour and the revival of his habitual feelings of regard.

He now rose and went towards Robin, who got up from his seat as he approached, and held out his hand.

'That 's right, Harry — go it — serve him out,' resounded on all sides — 'tip him the nailer — show him the mill.'

'Hold your peace all of you, and be ——,' said Wakefield; and then addressing his comrade, he took him by the extended hand, with something alike of respect and defiance. 'Robin,' he said, 'thou hast used me ill enough this day; but if you

mean, like a frank fellow, to shake hands, and take a tussle for love on the sod, why, I 'll forgie thee, man, and we shall be better friends than ever.'

'And would it not pe petter to pe cood friends without more of the matter?' said Robin; 'we will be much petter friendships with our panes hale than proken.'

Harry Wakefield dropped the hand of his friend, or rather threw it from him.

'I did not think I had been keeping company for three years with a coward.'

'Coward pelongs to none of my name,' said Robin, whose eyes began to kindle, but keeping the command of his temper. 'It was no coward's legs or hands, Harry Waakfelt, that drew you out of the fords of Frew, when you was drifting ower the plack rock, and every eel in the river expected his share of you.'

'And that is true enough, too,' said the Englishman, struck by the appeal.

'Adzooks!' exclaimed the bailiff; 'sure Harry Wakefield, the nattiest lad at Whitson Tryste, Wooler Fair, Carlisle Sands, or Stagshaw Bank, is not going to show white feather? Ah, this comes of living so long with kilts and bonnets; men forget the use of their daddles.'

'I may teach you, Master Fleecebumpkin, that I have not lost the use of mine,' said Wakefield, and then went on — 'This will never do, Robin. We must have a turn-up, or we shall be the talk of the countryside. I 'll be d—d if I hurt thee. I 'll put on the gloves gin thou like. Come, stand forward like a man.'

'To be peaten like a dog,' said Robin; 'is there any reason in that? If you think I have done you wrong, I 'll go before your shudge, though I neither know his law nor his language.'

A general cry of 'No, no — no law, no lawyer! A bellyful and be friends!' was echoed by the bystanders.

'But,' continued Robin, 'if I am to fight, I have no skill to fight like a jackanapes, with hands and nails.'

'How would you fight, then?' said his antagonist; 'though I am thinking it would be hard to bring you to the scratch anyhow.'

'I would fight with proadswords, and sink point on the first plood drawn, like a gentlemans.'

A loud shout of laughter followed the proposal, which indeed had rather escaped from poor Robin's swelling heart than been the dictate of his sober judgment.

'Gentleman, quotha!' was echoed on all sides, with a shout of unextinguishable laughter; 'a very pretty gentleman, God wot. Canst get two swords for the gentleman to fight with, Ralph Heskett?'

'No, but I can send to the armoury at Carlisle, and lend them two forks, to be making shift with in the meantime.'

'Tush, man,' said another, 'the bonny Scots come into the world with the blue bonnet on their heads, and dirk and pistol at their belt.'

'Best send post,' said Mr. Fleecebumpkin, 'to the squire of Corby Castle, to come and stand second to the *gentleman*.'

In the midst of this torrent of general ridicule, the Highlander instinctively griped beneath the folds of his plaid.

'But it's better not,' he said in his own language. 'A hundred curses on the swine-eaters, who know neither decency nor civility!'

'Make room, the pack of you,' he said, advancing to the door.

But his former friend interposed his sturdy bulk, and opposed his leaving the house; and when Robin Oig attempted to make his way by force, he hit him down on the floor, with as much ease as a boy bowls down a ninepin.

'A ring — a ring!' was now shouted, until the dark rafters, and the hams that hung on them, trembled again, and the very platters on the 'bink' clattered against each other. 'Well done, Harry' — 'Give it him home, Harry' — 'Take care of him now, he sees his own blood!'

Such were the exclamations, while the Highlander, starting from the ground, [illegible] coldness and caution lost in frantic rage, sprung at his [illegible] ist with the fury, the activity, and the vindictive purp[illegible] an incensed tiger-cat. But when could rage encounter science and temper? Robin Oig again went down in the unequal contest; and as the blow was necessarily a severe one, he lay motionless on the floor of the kitchen.

The landlady ran to offer some aid; but Mr. Fleecebumpkin would not permit her to approach. 'Let him alone,' he said, 'he will come to within time, and come up to the scratch again. He has not got half his broth yet.'

'He has got all I [illegible]ean to give him, though,' said his antagonist, whose heart [illegible]gan to relent towards his old associate; 'and I would rather by half give the rest to yourself, Mr. Fleecebumpkin, for you pretend to know a thing or two, and

Robin had not art enough even to peel before setting to, but fought with his plaid dangling about him. Stand up, Robin, my man, all friends now, and let me hear the man that will speak a word against you, or your country, for your sake.'

Robin Oig was still under the dominion of his passion, and eager to renew the onset; but being withheld on the one side by the peacemaking Dame Heskett, and on the other aware that Wakefield no longer meant to renew the combat, his fury sunk into gloomy sullenness.

'Come — come, never grudge so much at it, man,' said the brave-spirited Englishman, with the placability of his country; 'shake hands, and we will be better friends than ever.'

'Friends!' exclaimed Robin Oig with strong emphasis — 'friends! Never. Look to yourself, Harry Waakfelt.'

'Then the curse of Cromwell on your proud Scots stomach, as the man says in the play, and you may do your worst, and be d—d; for one man can say nothing more to another after a tussle, than that he is sorry for it.'

On these terms the friends parted. Robin Oig drew out, in silence, a piece of money, threw it on the table, and then left the alehouse. But, turning at the door, he shook his hand at Wakefield, pointing with his forefinger upwards, in a manner which might imply either a threat or a caution. He then disappeared in the moonlight.

Some words passed after his departure between the bailiff, who piqued himself on being a little of a bully, and Harry Wakefield, who, with generous inconsistency, was now not indisposed to begin a new combat in defence of Robin Oig's reputation, 'although he could not use his daddles like an Englishman, as it did not come natural to him.'

But Dame Heskett prevented this second quarrel from coming to a head by her peremptory interference. 'There should be no more fighting in her house,' she said; 'there had been too much already. And you, Mr. Wakefield, may live to learn,' she added, 'what it is to make a deadly enemy out of a good friend.'

'Pshaw, dame! Robin Oig is an honest fellow, and will never keep malice.'

'Do not trust to that: you do not know the dour temper of the Scots, though you have dealt with them so often. I have a right to know them, my mother being a Scot.'

'And so is well seen on her daughter,' said Ralph Heskett.

This nuptial sarcasm gave the discourse another turn; fresh

customers entered the taproom or kitchen, and others left it. The conversation turned on the expected markets, and the report of prices from different parts both of Scotland and England; treaties were commenced, and Harry Wakefield was lucky enough to find a chap for a part of his drove, and at a very considerable profit — an event of consequence more than sufficient to blot out all remembrances of the unpleasant scuffle in the earlier part of the day.

But there remained one party from whose mind that recollection could not have been wiped away by the possession of every head of cattle betwixt Esk and Eden. This was Robin Oig M'Combich. 'That I should have had no weapon,' he said, 'and for the first time in my life! Blighted be the tongue that bids the Highlander part with the dirk. The dirk — ha! the English blood! My muhme's word — when did her word fall to the ground?'

The recollection of the fatal prophecy confirmed the deadly intention which instantly sprang up in his mind.

'Ha! Morrison cannot be many miles behind; and if it were an hundred, what then?'

His impetuous spirit had now a fixed purpose and motive of action, and he turned the light foot of his country towards the wilds, through which he knew, by Mr. Ireby's report, that Morrison was advancing. His mind was wholly engrossed by the sense of injury — injury sustained from a friend, and by the desire of vengeance on one whom he now accounted his most bitter enemy. The treasured ideas of self-importance and self-opinion — of ideal birth and quality, had become more precious to him, like the hoard to the miser, because he could only enjoy them in secret. But that hoard was pillaged; the idols which he had secretly worshipped had been desecrated and profaned. Insulted, abused, and beaten, he was no longer worthy, in his own opinion, of the name he bore, or the lineage which he belonged to; nothing was left to him — nothing but revenge; and, as the reflection added a galling spur to every step, he determined it should be as sudden and signal as the offence.

When Robin Oig left the door of the alehouse, seven or eight English miles at least lay betwixt Morrison and him. The advance of the former was slow, limited by the sluggish pace of his cattle; the last left behind him stubble-field and hedgerow, crag and dark heath, all glittering with frost-rime in the broad November moonlight, at the rate of six miles an hour. And

now the distant lowing of Morrison's cattle is heard; and now they are seen creeping like moles in size and slowness of motion on the broad face of the moor; and now he meets them, passes them, and stops their conductor.

'May good betide us,' said the Southlander. 'Is this you, Robin M'Combich, or your wraith?'

'It is Robin Oig M'Combich,' answered the Highlander, 'and it is not. But never mind that, put pe giving me the skene-dhu.'

'What! you are for back to the Highlands. The devil! Have you selt all off before the fair? This beats all for quick markets.'

'I have not sold — I am not going north. May pe I will never go north again. Give me pack my dirk, Hugh Morrison, or there will pe words petween us.'

'Indeed, Robin, I'll be better advised before I gie it back to you; it is a wanchancy weapon in a Highlandman's hand, and I am thinking you will be about some barns-breaking.'

'Prutt, trutt! let me have my weapon,' said Robin Oig, impatiently.

'Hooly and fairly,' said his well-meaning friend. 'I'll tell you what will do better than these dirking doings. Ye ken Highlander, and Lowlander, and Bordermen are a' ae man's bairns when you are over the Scots dyke. See, the Eskdale callants, and fighting Charlie of Liddesdale, and the Lockerby lads, and the four Dandies of Lustruther, and a wheen mair grey plaids are coming up behind; and if you are wranged, there is the hand of a Manly Morrison, we'll see you righted, if Carlisle and Stanwix baith took up the feud.'

'To tell you the truth,' said Robin Oig, desirous of eluding the suspicions of his friend, 'I have enlisted with a party of the Black Watch, and must march off to-morrow morning.'

'Enlisted! Were you mad or drunk? You must buy your self off. I can lend you twenty notes, and twenty to that, if the drove sell.'

'I thank you — thank ye, Hughie; but I go with good-will the gate that I am going; so the dirk — the dirk!'

'There it is for you then, since less wunna serve. But think on what I was saying. Waes me, it will be sair news in the braes of Balquidder, that Robin Oig M'Combich should have run an ill gate, and ta'en on.'

'Ill news in Balquidder, indeed!' echoed poor Robin; 'but Cot speed you, Hughie, and send you good marcats. Ye winna meet with Robin Oig again, either at tryste or fair.'

So saying, he shook hastily the hand of his acquaintance, and set out in the direction from which he had advanced, with the spirit of his former pace.

'There is something wrang with the lad,' muttered the Morrison to himself; 'but we will maybe see better into it the morn's morning.'

But long ere the morning dawned, the catastrophe of our tale had taken place. It was two hours after the affray had happened, and it was totally forgotten by almost every one, when Robin Oig returned to Heskitt's inn. The place was filled at once by various sorts of men and with noises corresponding to their character. There were the grave low sounds of men engaged in busy traffic, with the laugh, the song, and the riotous jest of those who had nothing to do but to enjoy themselves. Among the last was Harry Wakefield, who, amidst a grinning group of smock-frocks, hobnailed shoes, and jolly English physiognomies, was trolling forth the old ditty,

> 'What though my name be Roger,
> Who drives the plough and cart ——,'

when he was interrupted by a well-known voice saying in a high and stern voice, marked by the sharp Highland accent, 'Harry Waakfelt, if you be a man, stand up!'

'What is the matter?— what is it?' the guests demanded of each other.

'It is only a d—d Scotsman,' said Fleecebumpkin, who was by this time very drunk, 'whom Harry Wakefield helped to his broth to-day, who is now come to have his cauld kail het again.'

'Harry Waakfelt,' repeated the same ominous summons, 'stand up, if you be a man!'

There is something in the tone of deep and concentrated passion which attracts attention and imposes awe, even by the very sound. The guests shrunk back on every side, and gazed at the Highlander as he stood in the middle of them, his brows bent, and his features rigid with resolution.

'I will stand up with all my heart, Robin, my boy, but it shall be to shake hands with you, and drink down all unkindness. It is not the fault of your heart, man, that you don't know how to clench your hands.'

By this time he stood opposite to his antagonist; his open and unsuspecting look strangely contrasted with the stern purpose which gleamed wild, dark, and vindictive in the eyes of the Highlander.

'T is not thy fault, man, that, not having the luck to be an Englishman, thou canst not fight more than a school girl.'

'I *can* fight,' answered Robin Oig, sternly but calmly, 'and you shall know it. You, Harry Wakefelt, showed me to day how the Saxon churls fight; I show you now how the Highland *dunnie-wassel* fights.'

He seconded the word with the action, and plunged the dagger, which he suddenly displayed, into the broad breast of the English yeoman, with such fatal certainty and force that the hilt made a hollow sound against the breast-bone, and the double-edged point split the very heart of his victim. Harry Wakefield fell and expired with a single groan. His assassin next seized the bailiff by the collar, and offered the bloody poniard to his throat, whilst dread and surprise rendered the man incapable of defence.

'It were very just to lay you beside him,' he said, 'but the blood of a base pickthank shall never mix on my father's dirk with that of a brave man.'

As he spoke, he cast the man from him with so much force that he fell on the floor, while Robin, with his other hand, threw the fatal weapon into the blazing turf-fire.

'There,' he said, 'take me who likes, and let fire cleanse blood if it can.'

The pause of astonishment still continuing, Robin Oig asked for a peace-officer, and a constable having stepped out, he surrendered himself to his custody.

'A bloody night's work you have made of it,' said the constable.

'Your own fault,' said the Highlander. 'Had you kept his hands off me twa hours since, he would have been now as well and merry as he was twa minutes since.'

'It must be sorely answered,' said the peace-officer.

'Never you mind that. Death pays all debts; it will pay that too.'

The horror of the bystanders began now to give way to indignation; and the sight of a favourite companion murdered in the midst of them, the provocation being, in their opinion, so utterly inadequate to the excess of vengeance, might have induced them to kill the perpetrator of the deed even upon the very spot. The constable, however, did his duty on this occasion, and, with the assistance of some of the more reasonable persons present, procured horses to guard the prisoner to Carlisle, to abide his doom at the next assizes. While the escort

was preparing, the prisoner neither expressed the least interest nor attempted the slightest reply. Only, before he was carried from the fatal apartment, he desired to look at the dead body, which, raised from the floor, had been deposited upon the large table (at the head of which Harry Wakefield had presided but a few minutes before, full of life, vigour, and animation), until the surgeons should examine the mortal wound. The face of the corpse was decently covered with a napkin. To the surprise and horror of the bystanders, which displayed itself in a general 'Ah!' drawn through clenched teeth and half-shut lips, Robin Oig removed the cloth, and gazed with a mournful but steady eye on the lifeless visage, which had been so lately animated, that the smile of good-humoured confidence in his own strength, of conciliation at once and contempt towards his enemy, still curled his lip. While those present expected that the wound, which had so lately flooded the apartment with gore, would send forth fresh streams at the touch of the homicide, Robin Oig replaced the covering with the brief exclamation — 'He was a pretty man!'

My story is nearly ended. The unfortunate Highlander stood his trial at Carlisle. I was myself present, and as a young Scottish lawyer, or barrister at least, and reputed a man of some quality, the politeness of the sheriff of Cumberland offered me a place on the bench. The facts of the case were proved in the manner I have related them; and whatever might be at first the prejudice of the audience against a crime so un-English as that of assassination from revenge, yet when the rooted national prejudices of the prisoner had been explained, which made him consider himself as stained with indelible dishonour when subjected to personal violence, when his previous patience, moderation, and endurance were considered, the generosity of the English audience was inclined to regard his crime as the wayward aberration of a false idea of honour rather than as flowing from a heart naturally savage, or perverted by habitual vice. I shall never forget the charge of the venerable judge to the jury, although not at that time liable to be much affected either by that which was eloquent or pathetic.

'We have had,' he said, 'in the previous part of our duty (alluding to some former trials), to discuss crimes which infer disgust and abhorrence, while they call down the well-merited vengeance of the law. It is now our still more melancholy task to apply its salutary though severe enactments to a case

of a very singular character, in which the crime, for a crime it is, and a deep one, arose less out of the malevolence of the heart than the error of the understanding — less from any idea of committing wrong than from an unhappily perverted notion of that which is right. Here we have two men, highly esteemed, it has been stated, in their rank of life, and attached, it seems, to each other as friends, one of whose lives has been already sacrificed to a punctilio, and the other is about to prove the vengeance of the offended laws; and yet both may claim our commiseration at least, as men acting in ignorance of each other's national prejudices, and unhappily misguided rather than voluntarily erring from the path of right conduct.

'In the original cause of the misunderstanding, we must in justice give the right to the prisoner at the bar. He had acquired possession of the inclosure, which was the object of competition, by a legal contract with the proprietor, Mr. Ireby; and yet, when accosted with reproaches undeserved in themselves, and galling doubtless to a temper at least sufficiently susceptible of passion, he offered notwithstanding to yield up half his acquisition, for the sake of peace and good neighbourhood, and his amicable proposal was rejected with scorn. Then follows the scene at Mr. Heskett the publican's, and you will observe how the stranger was treated by the deceased, and, I am sorry to observe, by those around, who seem to have urged him in a manner which was aggravating in the highest degree. While he asked for peace and for composition, and offered submission to a magistrate, or to a mutual arbiter, the prisoner was insulted by a whole company, who seem on this occasion to have forgotten the national maxim of "fair play"; and while attempting to escape from the place in peace, he was intercepted, struck down, and beaten to the effusion of his blood.

'Gentlemen of the jury, it was with some impatience that I heard my learned brother, who opened the case for the crown, give an unfavourable turn to the prisoner's conduct on this occasion. He said the prisoner was afraid to encounter his antagonist in fair fight, or to submit to the laws of the ring; and that, therefore, like a cowardly Italian, he had recourse to his fatal stiletto, to murder the man whom he dared not meet in manly encounter. I observed the prisoner shrink from this part of the accusation with the abhorrence natural to a brave man; and as I would wish to make my words impressive when I point his real crime, I must secure his opinion of my impartiality by rebutting everything that seems to me a false

accusation. There can be no doubt that the prisoner is a man of resolution — too much resolution. I wish to Heaven that he had less, or rather that he had had a better education to regulate it.

'Gentlemen, as to the laws my brother talks of, they may be known in the bull-ring, or the bear-garden, or the cockpit, but they are not known here. Or, if they should be so far admitted as furnishing a species of proof that no malice was intended in this sort of combat, from which fatal accidents do sometimes arise, it can only be so admitted when both parties are *in pari casu*, equally acquainted with, and equally willing to refer themselves to, that species of arbitrement. But will it be contended that a man of superior rank and education is to be subjected, or is obliged to subject himself, to this coarse and brutal strife, perhaps in opposition to a younger, stronger, or more skilful opponent? Certainly even the pugilistic code, if founded upon the fair play of Merry Old England, as my brother alleges it to be, can contain nothing so preposterous. And, gentlemen of the jury, if the laws would support an English gentleman, wearing, we will suppose, his sword, in defending himself by force against a violent personal aggression of the nature offered to this prisoner, they will not less protect a foreigner and a stranger, involved in the same unpleasing circumstances. If, therefore, gentlemen of the jury, when thus pressed by a *vis major*, the object of obloquy to a whole company, and of direct violence from one at least, and, as he might reasonably apprehend, from more, the panel had produced the weapon which his countrymen, as we are informed, generally carry about their persons, and the same unhappy circumstance had ensued which you have heard detailed in evidence, I could not in my conscience have asked from you a verdict of murder. The prisoner's personal defence might indeed, even in that case, have gone more or less beyond the *moderamen inculpatæ tutelæ* spoken of by lawyers, but the punishment incurred would have been that of manslaughter, not of murder. I beg leave to add, that I should have thought this milder species of charge was demanded in the case supposed, notwithstanding the statute of James I. cap. 8, which takes the case of slaughter by stabbing with a short weapon, even without malice prepense, out of the benefit of clergy. For this statute of stabbing, as it is termed, arose out of a temporary cause · and as the real guilt is the same, whether the slaughter be committed by the dagger or by sword or pistol, the benignity of

the modern law places them all on the same, or nearly the same, footing.

'But, gentlemen of the jury, the pinch of the case lies in the interval of two hours interposed betwixt the reception of the injury and the fatal retaliation. In the heat of affray and *chaude melée*, law, compassionating the infirmities of humanity, makes allowance for the passions which rule such a stormy moment — for the sense of present pain, for the apprehension of further injury, for the difficulty of ascertaining with due accuracy the precise degree of violence which is necessary to protect the person of the individual, without annoying or injuring the assailant more than is absolutely necessary. But the time necessary to walk twelve miles, however speedily performed, was an interval sufficient for the prisoner to have recollected himself; and the violence with which he carried his purpose into effect, with so many circumstances of deliberate determination, could neither be induced by the passion of anger nor that of fear. It was the purpose and the act of predetermined revenge, for which law neither can, will, nor ought to have sympathy or allowance.

'It is true, we may repeat to ourselves, in alleviation of this poor man's unhappy action, that his case is a very peculiar one. The country which he inhabits was, in the days of many now alive, inaccessible to the laws not only of England, which have not even yet penetrated thither, but to those to which our neighbours of Scotland are subjected, and which must be supposed to be, and no doubt actually are, founded upon the general principles of justice and equity which pervade every civilised country. Amongst their mountains, as among the North American Indians, the various tribes were wont to make war upon each other, so that each man was obliged to go armed for his own protection. These men, from the ideas which they entertained of their own descent and of their own consequence, regarded themselves as so many cavaliers or men-at-arms, rather than as the peasantry of a peaceful country. Those laws of the ring, as my brother terms them, were unknown to the race of warlike mountaineers; that decision of quarrels by no other weapons than those which nature has given every man must to them have seemed as vulgar and as preposterous as to the *noblesse* of France. Revenge, on the other hand, must have been as familiar to their habits of society as to those of the Cherokees or Mohawks. It is indeed, as described by Bacon, at bottom a kind of wild untutored justice; for the fear of retaliation

must withhold the hands of the oppressor where there is no regular law to check daring violence. But though all this may be granted, and though we may allow that, such having been the case of the Highlands in the days of the prisoner's fathers, many of the opinions and sentiments must still continue to influence the present generation, it cannot, and ought not, even in this most painful case, to alter the administration of the law, either in your hands, gentlemen of the jury, or in mine. The first object of civilisation is to place the general protection of the law, equally administered, in the room of that wild justice which every man cut and carved for himself, according to the length of his sword and the strength of his arm. The law says to the subjects, with a voice only inferior to that of the Deity, "Vengeance is mine." The instant that there is time for passion to cool and reason to interpose, an injured party must become aware that the law assumes the exclusive cognizance of the right and wrong betwixt the parties, and opposes her inviolable buckler to every attempt of the private party to right himself. I repeat, that this unhappy man ought personally to be the object rather of our pity than our abhorrence, for he failed in his ignorance and from mistaken notions of honour. But his crime is not the less that of murder, gentlemen, and, in your high and important office, it is your duty so to find. Englishmen have their angry passions as well as Scots; and should this man's action remain unpunished, you may unsheath, under various pretences, a thousand daggers betwixt the Land's End and the Orkneys.'

The venerable judge thus ended what, to judge by his apparent emotion, and by the tears which filled his eyes, was really a painful task. The jury, according to his instructions, brought in a verdict of Guilty; and Robin Oig M'Combich, *alias* M'Gregor, was sentenced to death, and left for execution, which took place accordingly. He met his fate with great firmness, and acknowledged the justice of his sentence. But he repelled indignantly the observations of those who accused him of attacking an unarmed man. 'I give a life for the life I took,' he said, 'and what can I do more?'[1]

[1] See Robert Donn's Poems. Note 14.

MY AUNT MARGARET'S MIRROR

INTRODUCTION

THE species of publication which has come to be generally known by the title of Annual, being a miscellany of prose and verse, equipped with numerous engravings, and put forth every year about Christmas, had flourished for a long while in Germany before it was imitated in this country by an enterprising bookseller, a German by birth, Mr. Ackermann. The rapid success of his work, as is the custom of the time, gave birth to a host of rivals, and, among others, to an Annual styled *The Keepsake*, the first volume of which appeared in 1828, and attracted much notice, chiefly in consequence of the very uncommon splendour of its illustrative accompaniments. The expenditure which the spirited proprietors lavished on this magnificent volume is understood to have been not less than from ten to twelve thousand pounds sterling.

Various gentlemen of such literary reputation that any one might think it an honour to be associated with them had been announced as contributors to this Annual before application was made to me to assist in it; and I accordingly placed with much pleasure at the editor's disposal a few fragments, originally designed to have been worked into the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, besides a MS. drama, the long-neglected performance of my youthful days — *The House of Aspen*.

The Keepsake for 1828 included, however, only three of these little prose tales, of which the first in order was that entitled *My Aunt Margaret's Mirror*. A way of introduction to this, when now included in a general collection of my lucubrations, I have only to say, that it is a mere transcript, or at least with very little embellishment, of a story that I remembered being struck with in my childhood, when told at the fireside by a lady of eminent virtues, and no inconsiderable share of talent, one of the ancient and honourable house of

Swinton. She was a kind relation of my own,[1] and met her death in a manner so shocking, being killed in a fit of insanity by a female attendant who had been attached to her person for half a lifetime, that I cannot now recall her memory, child as I was when the catastrophe occurred, without a painful re-awakening of perhaps the first images of horror that the scenes of real life stamped on my mind.

This good spinster had in her composition a strong vein of the superstitious, and was pleased, among other fancies, to read alone in her chamber by a taper fixed in a candlestick which she had had formed out of a human skull. One night this strange piece of furniture acquired suddenly the power of locomotion, and, after performing some odd circles on her chimneypiece, fairly leaped on the floor and continued to roll about the apartment. Mrs. Swinton calmly proceeded to the adjoining room for another light, and had the satisfaction to penetrate the mystery on the spot. Rats abounded in the ancient building she inhabited, and one of these had managed to ensconce itself within her favourite *memento mori*. Though thus endowed with a more than feminine share of nerve, she entertained largely that belief in supernaturals which in those times was not considered as sitting ungracefully on the grave and aged of her condition; and the story of the Magic Mirror was one for which she vouched with particular confidence, alleging, indeed, that one of her own family had been an eye-witness of the incidents recorded in it.

I tell the tale as it was told to me.

Stories enow of much the same cast will present themselves to the recollection of such of my readers as have ever dabbled in a species of lore to which I certainly gave more hours, at one period of my life, than I should gain any credit by confessing.

August 1831

[1] [Great-aunt to Scott.]

MY AUNT MARGARET'S MIRROR

There are times
When fancy plays her gambols, in despite
Even of our watchful senses, when in sooth
Substance seems shadow, shadow substance seems,
When the broad, palpable, and mark'd partition
'Twixt that which is and is not seems dissolved,
As if the mental eye gain'd power to gaze
Beyond the limits of the existing world.
Such hours of shadowy dreams I better love
Than all the gross realities of life.

ANONYMOUS.

MY Aunt Margaret was one of that respected sisterhood upon whom devolve all the trouble and solicitude incidental to the possession of children, excepting only that which attends their entrance into the world. We were a large family, of very different dispositions and constitutions. Some were dull and peevish — they were sent to Aunt Margaret to be amused; some were rude, romping, and boisterous — they were sent to Aunt Margaret to be kept quiet, or rather, that their noise might be removed out of hearing; those who were indisposed were sent with the prospect of being nursed, those who were stubborn with the hope of their being subdued by the kindness of Aunt Margaret's discipline; in short, she had all the various duties of a mother, without the credit and dignity of the maternal character. The busy scene of her various cares is now over: of the invalid and the robust, the kind and the rough, the peevish and pleased, children, who thronged her little parlour from morning to night, not one now remains alive but myself, who, afflicted by early infirmity, was one of the most delicate of her nurslings, yet, nevertheless, have outlived them all.

It is still my custom, and shall be so while I have the use of my limbs, to visit my respected relation at least three times

a-week. Her abode is about half a mile from the suburbs of the town in which I reside, and is accessible not only by the highroad, from which it stands at some distance, but by means of a greensward footpath, leading through some pretty meadows. I have so little left to torment me in life, that it is one of my greatest vexations to know that several of these sequestered fields have been devoted as sites for building. In that which is nearest the town, wheelbarrows have been at work for several weeks in such numbers that, I verily believe, its whole surface, to the depth of at least eighteen inches, was mounted in these monotrochs at the same moment, and in the act of being transported from one place to another. Huge triangular piles of planks are also reared in different parts of the devoted messuage; and a little group of trees, that still grace the eastern end, which rises in a gentle ascent, have just received warning to quit, expressed by a daub of white paint, and are to give place to a curious grove of chimneys.

It would, perhaps, hurt others in my situation to reflect that this little range of pasturage once belonged to my father, whose family was of some consideration in the world, and was sold by patches to remedy distresses in which he involved himself in an attempt by commercial adventure to redeem his diminished fortune. While the building scheme was in full operation, this circumstance was often pointed out to me by the class of friends who are anxious that no part of your misfortunes should escape your observation. 'Such pasture-ground! lying at the very town's end; in turnips and potatoes, the parks would bring £20 per acre, and if leased for building —— O it was a gold mine! And all sold for an old song out of the ancient possessor's hands!' My comforters cannot bring me to repine much on this subject. If I could be allowed to look back on the past without interruption, I could willingly give up the enjoyment of present income, and the hope of future profit, to those who have purchased what my father sold. I regret the alteration of the ground only because it destroys associations, and I would more willingly, I think, see the Earl's Closes in the hands of strangers, retaining their silvan appearance, than know them for my own, if torn up by agriculture or covered with buildings. Mine are the sensations of poor Logan:

> The horrid plough has rased the green
> Where yet a child I stray'd;
> The axe has fell'd the hawthorn screen,
> The schoolboy's summer shade.

I hope, however, the threatened devastation will not be consummated in my day. Although the adventurous spirit of times short while since passed gave rise to the undertaking, I have been encouraged to think that the subsequent changes have so far damped the spirit of speculation, that the rest of the woodland footpath leading to Aunt Margaret's retreat will be left undisturbed for her time and mine. I am interested in this, for every step of the way, after I have passed through the green already mentioned, has for me something of early remembrance. There is the stile at which I can recollect a cross child's-maid upbraiding me with my infirmity, as she lifted me coarsely and carelessly over the flinty steps, which my brothers traversed with shout and bound. I remember the suppressed bitterness of the moment, and, conscious of my own inferiority, the feeling of envy with which I regarded the easy movements and elastic steps of my more happily-formed brethren. Alas! these goodly barks have all perished on life's wide ocean, and only that which seemed so little seaworthy, as the naval phrase goes, has reached the port when the tempest is over. Then there is the pool, where, manœuvring our little navy, constructed out of the broad water-flags, my elder brother fell in, and was scarce saved from the watery element to die under Nelson's banner. There is the hazel copse also, in which my brother Henry used to gather nuts, thinking little that he was to die in an Indian jungle in quest of rupees.

There is so much more of remembrance about the little walk, that, as I stop, rest on my crutch-headed cane, and look round with that species of comparison between the thing I was and that which I now am, it almost induces me to doubt my own identity; until I find myself in face of the honeysuckle porch of Aunt Margaret's dwelling, with its irregularity of front, and its odd projecting latticed windows, where the workmen seem to have made a study that no one of them should resemble another in form, size, or in the old-fashioned stone entablature and labels which adorn them. This tenement, once the manor-house of Earl's Closes, we still retain a slight hold upon; for, in some family arrangements, it had been settled upon Aunt Margaret during the term of her life. Upon this frail tenure depends, in a great measure, the last shadow of the family of Bothwell of Earl's Closes, and their last slight connexion with their paternal inheritance. The only representative will then be an infirm old man, moving not

unwillingly to the grave, which has devoured all that were dear to his affections.

When I have indulged such thoughts for a minute or two, I enter the mansion, which is said to have been the gatehouse only of the original building, and find one being on whom time seems to have made little impression; for the Aunt Margaret of to-day bears the same proportional age to the Aunt Margaret of my early youth that the boy of ten years old does to the man of — by 'r Lady! — some fifty-six years. The old lady's invariable costume has doubtless some share in confirming one in the opinion that time has stood still with Aunt Margaret.

The brown or chocolate-coloured silk gown, with ruffles of the same stuff at the elbow, within which are others of Mechlin lace, the black silk gloves, or mitts, the white hair combed back upon a roll, and the cap of spotless cambric, which closes around the venerable countenance, as they were not the costume of 1780, so neither were they that of 1826: they are altogether a style peculiar to the individual Aunt Margaret. There she still sits, as she sat thirty years since, with her wheel or the stocking, which she works by the fire in winter and by the window in summer, or perhaps venturing as far as the porch in an unusually fine summer evening. Her frame, like some well-constructed piece of mechanics, still performs the operations for which it had seemed destined, going its round with an activity which is gradually diminished, yet indicating no probability that it will soon come to a period.

The solicitude and affection which had made Aunt Margaret the willing slave to the inflictions of a whole nursery, have now for their object the health and comfort of one old and infirm man, the last remaining relative of her family, and the only one who can still find interest in the traditional stores which she hoards, as some miser hides the gold which he desires that no one should enjoy after his death.

My conversation with Aunt Margaret generally relates little either to the present or to the future; for the passing day we possess as much as we require, and we neither of us wish for more; and for that which is to follow we have on this side of the grave neither hopes, nor fears, nor anxiety. We therefore naturally look back to the past, and forget the present fallen fortunes and declined importance of our family, in recalling the hours when it was wealthy and prosperous.

With this slight introduction, the reader will know as much

of Aunt Margaret and her nephew as is necessary to comprehend the following conversation and narrative.

Last week, when, late in a summer evening, I went to call on the old lady to whom my reader is now introduced, I was received by her with all her usual affection and benignity; while, at the same time, she seemed abstracted and disposed to silence. I asked her the reason. 'They have been clearing out the old chapel,' she said, 'John Clayhudgeons having, it seems, discovered that the stuff within — being, I suppose, the remains of our ancestors — was excellent for top-dressing the meadows.'

Here I started up with more alacrity than I have displayed for some years; but sat down while my aunt added, laying her hand upon my sleeve, 'The chapel has been long considered as common ground, my dear, and used for a penfold, and what objection can we have to the man for employing what is his own to his own profit? Besides, I did speak to him, and he very readily and civilly promised that, if he found bones or monuments, they should be carefully respected and reinstated; and what more could I ask? So, the first stone they found bore the name of Margaret Bothwell, 1585, and I have caused it to be laid carefully aside, as I think it betokens death; and having served my namesake two hundred years, it has just been cast up in time to do me the same good turn. My house has been long put in order, as far as the small earthly concerns require it, but who shall say that their account with Heaven is sufficiently revised?'

'After what you have said, aunt,' I replied, 'perhaps I ought to take my hat and go away, and so I should, but that there is on this occasion a little alloy mingled with your devotion. To think of death at all times is a duty; to suppose it nearer, from the finding an old gravestone, is superstition; and you, with your strong, useful common sense, which was so long the prop of a fallen family, are the last person whom I should have suspected of such weakness.'

'Neither would I deserve your suspicions, kinsman,' answered Aunt Margaret, 'if we were speaking of any incident occurring in the actual business of human life. But for all this, I have a sense of superstition about me, which I do not wish to part with. It is a feeling which separates me from this age, and links me with that to which I am hastening; and even when it seems, as now, to lead me to the brink of the grave, and bids me gaze on it, I do not love that it should be dispelled.

It soothes my imagination, without influencing my reason or conduct.'

'I profess, my good lady,' replied I, 'that had any one but you made such a declaration, I should have thought it as capricious as that of the clergyman who, without vindicating his false reading, preferred, from habit's sake, his old *mumpsimus* to the modern *sumpsimus*.'

'Well,' answered my aunt, 'I must explain my inconsistency in this particular, by comparing it to another. I am, as you know, a piece of that old-fashioned thing called a Jacobite; but I am so in sentiment and feeling only; for a more loyal subject never joined in prayers for the health and wealth of George the Fourth, whom God long preserve! But I daresay that kind hearted sovereign would not deem that an old woman did him much injury, if she leaned back in her arm-chair, just in such a twilight as this, and thought of the high-mettled men whose sense of duty called them to arms against his grandfather; and how, in a cause which they deemed that of their rightful prince and country,

> They fought till their hand to the broadsword was glued,
> They fought against fortune with hearts unsubdued.

Do not come at such a moment, when my head is full of plaids, pibrochs, and claymores, and ask my reason to admit what, I am afraid, it cannot deny; I mean, that the public advantage peremptorily demanded that these things should cease to exist. I cannot, indeed, refuse to allow the justice of your reasoning; but yet, being convinced against my will, you will gain little by your motion. You might as well read to an infatuated lover the catalogue of his mistress's imperfections; for, when he has been compelled to listen to the summary, you will only get for answer, that, "he lo'es her a' the better."'

I was not sorry to have changed the gloomy train of Aunt Margaret's thoughts, and replied in the same tone, 'Well, I can't help being persuaded that our good king is the more sure of Mrs. Bothwell's loyal affection, that he has the Stuart right of birth, as well as the Act of Succession, in his favour.'

'Perhaps my attachment, were its source of consequence, might be found warmer for the union of the rights you mention,' said Aunt Margaret; 'but, upon my word, it would be as sincere if the king's right were founded only on the will of the nation, as declared at the Revolution. I am none of your *jure divino* folks.'

'And a Jacobite notwithstanding.'

'And a Jacobite notwithstanding; or rather, I will give you leave to call me one of the party which, in Queen Anne's time, were called *Whimsicals*; because they were sometimes operated upon by feelings, sometimes by principle. After all, it is very hard that you will not allow an old woman to be as inconsistent in her political sentiments as mankind in general show themselves in all the various courses of life; since you cannot point out one of them in which the passions and prejudices of those who pursue it are not perpetually carrying us away from the path which our reason points out.'

'True, aunt; but you are a wilful wanderer, who should be forced back into the right path.'

'Spare me, I entreat you,' replied Aunt Margaret. 'You remember the Gaelic song, though I daresay I mispronounce the words —

Hatil mohatil, na dowski mi.

(I am asleep, do not waken me.)

I tell you, kinsman, that the sort of waking dreams which my imagination spins out, in what your favourite Wordsworth calls "moods of my own mind," are worth all the rest of my more active days. Then, instead of looking forwards, as I did in youth, and forming for myself fairy palaces, upon the verge of the grave, I turn my eyes backward upon the days and manners of my better time; and the sad, yet soothing, recollections come so close and interesting, that I almost think it sacrilege to be wiser or more rational, or less prejudiced, than those to whom I looked up in my younger years.'

'I think I now understand what you mean,' I answered, 'and can comprehend why you should occasionally prefer the twilight of illusion to the steady light of reason.'

'Where there is no task,' she rejoined, 'to be performed, we may sit in the dark if we like it; if we go to work, we must ring for candles.'

'And amidst such shadowy and doubtful light,' continued I, 'imagination frames her enchanted and enchanting visions, and sometimes passes them upon the senses for reality.'

'Yes,' said Aunt Margaret, who is a well-read woman, 'to those who resemble the translator of Tasso,

> Prevailing poet, whose undoubting mind
> Believed the magic wonders which he sung.

It is not required for this purpose, that you should be sensible of the painful horrors which an actual belief in such prodigies

inflicts: such a belief, nowadays, belongs only to fools and children. It is not necessary that your ears should tingle, and your complexion change, like that of Theodore, at the approach of the spectral huntsman. All that is indispensable for the enjoyment of the milder feeling of supernatural awe is, that you should be susceptible of a slight shuddering which creeps over you when you hear a tale of terror — that well-vouched tale which the narrator, having first expressed his general disbelief of all such legendary lore, selects and produces as having something in it which he has never always obliged to give up as inexplicable. Another symptom is a momentary hesitation to look round you when the interest of the narrative is at the highest; and the third, a desire to avoid looking into a mirror, when you are alone in your chamber for the evening. I mean such are signs which indicate the mesmeric female imagination is in due temperature to enjoy a ghost story. I do not pretend to describe those which express the same disposition in a gentleman.'

'That last symptom, dear aunt, of shunning the mirror, seems likely to be a rare occurrence amongst the fair sex.'

'You are a novice in toilet fashions, my dear cousin. All women consult the looking-glass with anxiety before they go into company; but when they return home, the mirror has not the same charm. The die has been cast: the party has been successful or unsuccessful, in the impression which she desired to make. But, without going deeper into the mysteries of the dressing-table, I will tell you that I myself, like many other honest folks, do not like to see the blank black front of a large mirror in a room dimly lighted, and where the reflection of the candle seems rather to lose itself in the deep obscurity of the glass than to be reflected back again into the apartment. That space of inky darkness seems to be a field for fancy to play her revels in. She may call up other features to meet us, instead of the reflection of our own; or, as in the spells of Hallowe'en, which we learned in childhood, some unknown form may be seen peeping over our shoulder. In short, when I am in a ghost-seeing humour, I make my handmaiden draw the green curtains over the mirror before I go into the room, so that she may have the first shock of the apparition, if there be any to be seen. But, to tell you the truth, this dislike to look into a mirror in particular times and places has, I believe, its original foundation in a story which came to me by tradition from my grandmother, who was a party concerned in the scene of which I will now tell you.'

THE MIRROR

CHAPTER I

YOU are fond (said my aunt) of sketches of the society which has passed away. I wish I could describe to you Sir Philip Forester, the 'chartered libertine' of Scottish good company, about the end of the last century. I never saw him indeed; but my mother's traditions were full of his wit, gallantry, and dissipation. This gay knight flourished about the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century. He was the Sir Charles Easy and the Lovelace of his day and country, renowned for the number of duels he had fought and the successful intrigues which he had carried on. The supremacy which he had attained in the fashionable world was absolute; and when we combine it with one or two anecdotes, for which, 'if laws were made for every degree,' he ought certainly to have been hanged, the popularity of such a person really serves to show, either that the present times are much more decent, if not more virtuous, than they formerly were, or that high-breeding then was of more difficult attainment than that which is now so called, and, consequently, entitled the successful professor to a proportional degree of plenary indulgences and privileges. No beau of this day could have borne out so ugly a story as that of Pretty Peggy Grindstone, the miller's daughter at Sillermills; it had wellnigh made work for the Lord Advocate. But it hurt Sir Philip Forester no more than the hail hurts the hearthstone. He was as well received in society ever, and dined with the Duke of A—— the day the poor girl was buried. She died of heartbreak. But that has nothing to do with my story.

Now, you must listen to a single word upon kin, kind and ally; I promise you I will not be prolix. But it is necessary to the authenticity of my legend that you should ... that

Sir Philip Forester, with his handsome person, elegant accomplishments, and fashionable manners, married the younger Miss Falconer of King's-Copland. The elder sister of this lady had previously become the wife of my grandfather, Sir Geoffrey Bothwell, and brought into our family a good fortune. Miss Jemima, or Miss Jemmie, Falconer, as she was usually called, had also about ten thousand pounds sterling, then thought a very handsome portion indeed.

The two sisters were extremely different, though each had their admirers while they remained single. Lady Bothwell had some touch of the old King's-Copland blood about her. She was bold, though not to the degree of audacity; ambitious, and desirous to raise her house and family; and was, as has been said, a considerable spur to my grandfather, who was otherwise an indolent man, but whom, unless he has been slandered, his lady's influence involved in some political matters which had been more wisely let alone. She was a woman of high principle, however, and masculine good sense, as some of her letters testify, which are still in my wainscot cabinet.

Jemmie Falconer was the reverse of her sister in every respect. Her understanding did not reach above the ordinary pitch, if, indeed, she could be said to have attained it. Her beauty, while it lasted, consisted, in a great measure, of delicacy of complexion and regularity of features, without any peculiar force of expression. Even these charms faded under the sufferings attendant on an ill-sorted match. She was passionately attached to her husband, by whom she was treated with a callous, yet polite, indifference, which, to one whose heart was as tender as her judgment was weak, was more painful perhaps than absolute ill-usage. Sir Philip was a voluptuary, that is, a completely selfish egotist, whose disposition and character resembled the rapier he wore — polished, keen, and brilliant, but inflexible and unpitying. As he observed carefully all the usual forms towards his lady, he had the art to deprive her even of the compassion of the world; and useless and unavailing as that may be while actually possessed by the sufferer, it is, to a mind like Lady Forester's, most painful to know she has it not.

The tattle of society did its best to place the peccant husband above the suffering wife. Some called her a poor spiritless thing, and declared that, with a little of her sister's spirit, she might have brought to reason any Sir Philip whatsoever, were it the termagant Falconbridge himself. But the greater part

of their acquaintance affected candour, and saw faults on both sides; though, in fact, there only existed the oppressor and the oppressed. The tone of such critics was — 'To be sure, no one will justify Sir Philip Forester, but then we all know Sir Philip, and Jemmie Falconer might have known what she had to expect from the beginning. What made her set her cap at Sir Philip? He would never have looked at her if she had not thrown herself at his head, with her poor ten thousand pounds. I am sure, if it is money he wanted, she spoiled his market. I know where Sir Philip could have done much better. And then, if she *would* have the man, could not she try to make him more comfortable at home, and have his friends oftener, and not plague him with the squalling children, and take care all was handsome and in good style about the house? I declare I think Sir Philip would have made a very domestic man, with a woman who knew how to manage him.'

Now these fair critics, in raising their profound edifice of domestic felicity, did not recollect that the corner-stone was wanting, and that, to receive good company with good cheer, the means of the banquet ought to have been furnished by Sir Philip, whose income, dilapidated as it was, was not equal to the display of the hospitality required, and at the same time to the supply of the good knight's *menus plaisirs*. So, in spite of all that was so sagely suggested by female friends, Sir Philip carried his good-humour everywhere abroad, and left at home a solitary mansion and a pining spouse.

At length, inconvenienced in his money affairs, and tired even of the short time which he spent in his own dull house, Sir Philip Forester determined to take a trip to the continent, in the capacity of a volunteer. It was then common for men of fashion to do so; and our knight perhaps was of opinion that a touch of the military character, just enough to exalt, but not render pedantic, his qualities as a *beau garçon*, was necessary to maintain possession of the elevated situation which he held in the ranks of fashion.

Sir Philip's resolution threw his wife into agonies of terror; by which the worthy baronet was so much annoyed, that, contrary to his wont, he took some trouble to soothe her apprehensions, and once more brought her to shed tears in which sorrow was not altogether unmingled with pleasure. Lady Bothwell asked, as a favour, Sir Philip's permission to receive her sister and her family into her own house during his absence on the continent. Sir Philip readily assented to a proposition

which saved expense, silenced the foolish people who might have talked of a deserted wife and family, and gratified Lady Bothwell; for whom he felt some respect, as for one who often spoke to him, always with freedom, and sometimes with severity, without being deterred either by his raillery or the prestige of his reputation.

A day or two before Sir Philip's departure, Lady Bothwell took the liberty of asking him, in her sister's presence, the direct question which his timid wife had often desired, but never ventured, to put to him.

'Pray, Sir Philip, what route do you take when you reach the continent?'

'I go from Leith to Helvoet by a packet with advices.'

'That I comprehend perfectly,' said Lady Bothwell, drily; 'but you do not mean to remain long at Helvoet, I presume, and I should like to know what is your next object?'

'You ask me, my dear lady,' answered Sir Philip, 'a question which I have not dared to ask myself. The answer depends on the fate of war. I shall, of course, go to headquarters, wherever they may happen to be for the time, deliver my letters of introduction, learn as much of the noble art of war as may suffice a poor interloping amateur, and then take a glance at the sort of thing of which we read so much in the *Gazette*.'

'And I trust, Sir Philip,' said Lady Bothwell, 'that you will remember that you are a husband and a father; and that, though you think fit to indulge this military fancy, you will not let it hurry you into dangers which it is certainly unnecessary for any save professional persons to encounter?'

'Lady Bothwell does me too much honour,' replied the adventurous knight, 'in regarding such a circumstance with the slightest interest. But to soothe your flattering anxiety, I trust your ladyship will recollect, that I cannot expose to hazard the venerable and paternal character which you so obligingly recommend to my protection, without putting in some peril an honest fellow, called Philip Forester, with whom I have kept company for thirty years, and with whom, though some folks consider him a coxcomb, I have not the least desire to part.'

'Well, Sir Philip, you are the best judge of your own affairs: I have little right to interfere — you are not my husband.'

'God forbid!' said Sir Philip, hastily; instantly adding, however, 'God forbid that I should deprive my friend Sir Geoffrey of so inestimable a treasure.'

'But you are my sister's husband,' replied the lady; 'and I suppose you are aware of her present distress of mind ——'

'If hearing of nothing else from morning to night can make me aware of it,' said Sir Philip, 'I should know something of the matter.'

'I do not pretend to reply to your wit, Sir Philip,' answered Lady Bothwell; 'but you must be sensible that all this distress is on account of apprehensions for your personal safety.'

'In that case, I am surprised that Lady Bothwell, at least, should give herself so much trouble upon so insignificant a subject.'

'My sister's interest may account for my being anxious to learn something of Sir Philip Forester's motions; about which, otherwise, I know, he would not wish me to concern myself. I have a brother's safety too to be anxious for.'

'You mean Major Falconer, your brother by the mother's side. What can he possibly have to do with our present agreeable conversation?'

'You have had words together, Sir Philip,' said Lady Bothwell.

'Naturally; we are connexions,' replied Sir Philip, 'and as such have always had the usual intercourse.'

'That is an evasion of the subject,' answered the lady. 'By words, I mean angry words, on the subject of your usage of your wife.'

'If,' replied Sir Philip Forester, 'you suppose Major Falconer simple enough to intrude his advice upon me, Lady Bothwell, in my domestic matters, you are indeed warranted in believing that I might possibly be so far displeased with the interference as to request him to reserve his advice till it was asked.'

'And being on these terms, you are going to join the very army in which my brother Falconer is now serving?'

'No man knows the path of honour better than Major Falconer,' said Sir Philip. 'An aspirant after fame, like me, cannot choose a better guide than his footsteps.'

Lady Bothwell rose and went to the window, the tears gushing from her eyes.

'And this heartless raillery,' she said, 'is all the consideration that is to be given to our apprehensions of a quarrel which may bring on the most terrible consequences? Good God, of what can men's hearts be made, who can thus dally with the agony of others?'

Sir Philip Forester was moved; he laid aside the mocking tone in which he had hitherto spoken.

'Dear Lady Bothwell,' he said, taking her reluctant hand, 'we are both wrong: you are too deeply serious; I, perhaps, too little so. The dispute I had with Major Falconer was of no earthly consequence. Had anything occurred betwixt us that ought to have been settled *par voie du fait*, as we say in France, neither of us are persons that are likely to postpone such a meeting. Permit me to say, that were it generally known that you or my Lady Forester are apprehensive of such a catastrophe, it might be the very means of bringing about what would not otherwise be likely to happen. I know your good sense, Lady Bothwell, and that you will understand me when I say that really my affairs require my absence for some months. This Jemima cannot understand; it is a perpetual recurrence of questions, why can you not do this, or that, or the third thing; and, when you have proved to her that her expedients are totally ineffectual, you have just to begin the whole round again. Now, do you tell her, dear Lady Bothwell, that *you* are satisfied. She is, you must confess, one of those persons with whom authority goes farther than reasoning. Do but repose a little confidence in me, and you shall see how amply I will repay it.'

Lady Bothwell shook her head, as one but half satisfied. 'How difficult it is to extend confidence when the basis on which it ought to rest has been so much shaken! But I will do my best to make Jemima easy; and farther, I can only say, that for keeping your present purpose I hold you responsible both to God and man.'

'Do not fear that I will deceive you,' said Sir Philip; 'the safest conveyance to me will be through the general post-office, Helvoetsluys, where I will take care to leave orders for forwarding my letters. As for Falconer, our only encounter will be over a bottle of Burgundy; so make yourself perfectly easy on his score.'

Lady Bothwell could *not* make herself easy; yet she was sensible that her sister hurt her own cause by 'taking on,' as the maid-servants call it, too vehemently; and by showing before every stranger, by manner, and sometimes by words also, a dissatisfaction with her husband's journey that was sure to come to his ears, and equally certain to displease him. But there was no help for this domestic dissension, which ended only with the day of separation.

I am sorry I cannot tell, with precision, the year in which Sir Philip Forester went over to Flanders; but it was one of those in which the campaign opened with extraordinary fury; and many bloody, though indecisive, skirmishes were fought between the French on the one side and the Allies on the other. In all our modern improvements, there are none, perhaps, greater than in the accuracy and speed with which intelligence is transmitted from any scene of action to those in this country whom it may concern. During Marlborough's campaigns the sufferings of the many who had relations in, or along with, the army were greatly augmented by the suspense in which they were detained for weeks, after they had heard of bloody battles in which, in all probability, those for whom their bosoms throbbed with anxiety had been personally engaged. Amongst those who were most agonised by this state of uncertainty was the — I had almost said deserted — wife of the gay Sir Philip Forester. A single letter had informed her of his arrival on the continent; no others were received. One notice occurred in the newspapers, in which Volunteer Sir Philip Forester was mentioned as having been entrusted with a dangerous reconnoissance, which he had executed with the greatest courage, dexterity, and intelligence, and received the thanks of the commanding-officer. The sense of his having acquired distinction brought a momentary glow into the lady's pale cheek; but it was instantly lost in ashen whiteness at the recollection of his danger. After this they had no news whatever, neither from Sir Philip nor even from their brother Falconer. The case of Lady Forester was not indeed different from that of hundreds in the same situation; but a feeble mind is necessarily an irritable one, and the suspense which some bear with constitutional indifference or philosophical resignation, and some with a disposition to believe and hope the best, was intolerable to Lady Forester, at once solitary and sensitive, low-spirited, and devoid of strength of mind, whether natural or acquired.

CHAPTER II

AS she received no further news of Sir Philip, whether directly or indirectly, his unfortunate lady began now to feel a sort of consolation even in those careless habits which had so often given her pain. 'He is so thoughtless,' she repeated a hundred times a-day to her sister, 'he never writes when things are going on smoothly — it is his way; had anything happened he would have informed us.'

Lady Bothwell listened to her sister without attempting to console her. Probably she might be of opinion, that even the worst intelligence which could be received from Flanders might not be without some touch of consolation; and that the Dowager Lady Forester, if so she was doomed to be called, might have a source of happiness unknown to the wife of the gayest and finest gentleman in Scotland. This conviction became stronger as they learned from inquiries made at headquarters that Sir Philip was no longer with the army; though whether he had been taken or slain in some of those skirmishes which were perpetually occurring, and in which he loved to distinguish himself, or whether he had, for some unknown reason or capricious change of mind, voluntarily left the service, none of his countrymen in the camp of the Allies could form even a conjecture. Meantime his creditors at home became clamorous, entered into possession of his property, and threatened his person, should he be rash enough to return to Scotland. These additional disadvantages aggravated Lady Bothwell's displeasure against the fugitive husband; while her sister saw nothing in any of them save what tended to increase her grief for the absence of him whom her imagination now represented, as it had before marriage, gallant, gay, and affectionate.

About this period there appeared in Edinburgh a man of singular appearance and pretensions. He was commonly called

the Paduan Doctor, from having received his education at that famous university. He was supposed to possess some rare receipts in medicine, with which, it was affirmed, he had wrought remarkable cures. But though, on the one hand, the physicians of Edinburgh termed him an empiric, there were many persons, and among them some of the clergy, who, while they admitted the truth of the cures and the force of his remedies, alleged that Doctor Baptista Damiotti made use of charms and unlawful arts in order to obtain success in his practice. The resorting to him was even solemnly preached against, as a seeking of health from idols, and a trusting to the help which was to come from Egypt. But the protection which the Paduan Doctor received from some friends of interest and consequence enabled him to set these imputations at defiance, and to assume, even in the city of Edinburgh, famed as it was for abhorrence of witches and necromancers, the dangerous character of an expounder of futurity. It was at length rumoured that, for a certain gratification, which of course was not an inconsiderable one, Doctor Baptista Damiotti could tell the fate of the absent, and even show his visitors the personal form of their absent friends, and the action in which they were engaged at the moment. This rumour came to the ears of Lady Forester, who had reached that pitch of mental agony in which the sufferer will do anything, or endure anything, that suspense may be converted into certainty.

Gentle and timid in most cases, her state of mind made her equally obstinate and reckless, and it was with no small surprise and alarm that her sister, Lady Bothwell, heard her express a resolution to visit this man of art and learn from him the fate of her husband. Lady Bothwell remonstrated on the improbability that such pretensions as those of this foreigner could be founded in anything but imposture.

'I care not,' said the deserted wife, 'what degree of ridicule I may incur; if there be any one chance out of a hundred that I may obtain some certainty of my husband's fate, I would not miss that chance for whatever else the world can offer me.'

Lady Bothwell next urged the unlawfulness of resorting to such sources of forbidden knowledge.

'Sister,' replied the sufferer, 'he who is dying of thirst cannot refrain from drinking even poisoned water. She who suffers under suspense must seek information, even were the powers which offer it unhallowed and infernal. I go to learn my fate alone, and this very evening will I know it: the sun

that rises to-morrow shall find me, if not more happy, at least more resigned.'

'Sister,' said Lady Bothwell, 'if you are determined upon this wild step, you shall not go alone. If this man be an impostor, you may be too much agitated by your feelings to detect his villainy. If, which I cannot believe, there be any truth in what he pretends, you shall not be exposed alone to a communication of so extraordinary a nature. I will go with you, if indeed you determine to go. But yet reconsider your project, and renounce inquiries which cannot be prosecuted without guilt, and perhaps without danger.'

Lady Forester threw herself into her sister's arms, and, clasping her to her bosom, thanked her a hundred times for the offer of her company; while she declined with a melancholy gesture the friendly advice with which it was accompanied.

When the hour of twilight arrived, which was the period when the Paduan Doctor was understood to receive the visits of those who came to consult with him, the two ladies left their apartments in the Canongate of Edinburgh, having their dress arranged like that of women of an inferior description, and their plaids disposed around their faces as they were worn by the same class; for, in those days of aristocracy, the quality of the wearer was generally indicated by the manner in which her plaid was disposed, as well as by the fineness of its texture. It was Lady Bothwell who had suggested this species of disguise, partly to avoid observation as they should go to the conjurer's house, and partly in order to make trial of his penetration, by appearing before him in a feigned character. Lady Forester's servant, of tried fidelity, had been employed by her to propitiate the doctor by a suitable fee, and a story intimating that a soldier's wife desired to know the fate of her husband — a subject upon which, in all probability, the sage was very frequently consulted.

To the last moment, when the palace clock struck eight, Lady Bothwell earnestly watched her sister, in hopes that she might retreat from her rash undertaking; but as mildness, and even timidity, is capable at times of vehement and fixed purposes, she found Lady Forester resolutely unmoved and determined when the moment of departure arrived. Ill satisfied with the expedition, but determined not to leave her sister at such a crisis, Lady Bothwell accompanied Lady Forester through more than one obscure street and lane, the servant walking before and acting as their guide. At length he

suddenly turned into a narrow court, and knocked at an arched door, which seemed to belong to a building of some antiquity. It opened, though no one appeared to act as porter; and the servant, stepping aside from the entrance, motioned the ladies to enter. They had no sooner done so than it shut, and excluded their guide. The two ladies found themselves in a small vestibule, illuminated by a dim lamp, and having, when the door was closed, no communication with the external light or air. The door of an inner apartment, partly open, was at the further side of the vestibule.

'We must not hesitate now, Jemima,' said Lady Bothwell, and walked forwards into the inner room, where, surrounded by books, maps, philosophical utensils, and other implements of peculiar shape and appearance, they found the man of art.

There was nothing very peculiar in the Italian's appearance. He had the dark complexion and marked features of his country, seemed about fifty years old, and was handsomely, but plainly, dressed in a full suit of black clothes, which was then the universal costume of the medical profession. Large wax-lights, in silver sconces, illuminated the apartment, which was reasonably furnished. He rose as the ladies entered; and, notwithstanding the inferiority of their dress, received them with the marked respect due to their quality, and which foreigners are usually punctilious in rendering to those to whom such honours are due.

Lady Bothwell endeavoured to maintain her proposed incognito; and, as the doctor ushered them to the upper end of the room, made a motion declining his courtesy, as unfitted for their condition. 'We are poor people, sir,' she said; 'only my sister's distress has brought us to consult your worship whether ——'

He smiled as he interrupted her — 'I am aware, madam, of your sister's distress, and its cause: I am aware, also, that I am honoured with a visit from two ladies of the highest consideration — Lady Bothwell and Lady Forester. If I could not distinguish them from the class of society which their present dress would indicate, there would be small possibility of my being able to gratify them by giving the information which they came to seek.'

'I can easily understand ——' said Lady Bothwell.

'Pardon my boldness to interrupt you, milady,' cried the Italian; 'your ladyship was about to say, that you could easily understand that I had got possession of your names by means

of your domestic. But in thinking so, you do injustice to the fidelity of your servant, and, I may add, to the skill of one who is also not less your humble servant — Baptista Damiotti.'

'I have no intention to do either, sir,' said Lady Bothwell, maintaining a tone of composure, though somewhat surprised, 'but the situation is something new to me. If you know who we are, you also know, sir, what brought us here.'

'Curiosity to know the fate of a Scottish gentleman of rank, now, or lately, upon the continent,' answered the seer; 'his name is Il Cavaliero Philippo Forester — a gentleman who has the honour to be husband to this lady, and, with your ladyship's permission for using plain language, the misfortune not to value as it deserves that inestimable advantage.'

Lady Forester sighed deeply, and Lady Bothwell replied —

'Since you know our object without our telling it, the only question that remains is, whether you have the power to relieve my sister's anxiety?'

'I have, madam,' answered the Paduan scholar; 'but there is still a previous inquiry. Have you the courage to behold with your own eyes what the Cavaliero Philippo Forester is now doing, or will you take it on my report?'

'That question my sister must answer for herself,' said Lady Bothwell.

'With my own eyes will I endure to see whatever you have power to show me,' said Lady Forester, with the same determined spirit which had stimulated her since her resolution was taken upon this subject.

'There may be danger in it.'

'If gold can compensate the risk,' said Lady Forester, taking out her purse.

'I do not such things for the purpose of gain,' answered the foreigner. 'I dare not turn my art to such a purpose. If I take the gold of the wealthy, it is but to bestow it on the poor; nor do I ever accept more than the sum I have already received from your servant. Put up your purse, madam: an adept needs not your gold.'

Lady Bothwell, considering this rejection of her sister's offer as a mere trick of an empiric, to induce her to press a larger sum upon him, and willing that the scene should be commenced and ended, offered some gold in turn, observing, that it was only to enlarge the sphere of his charity.

'Let Lady Bothwell enlarge the sphere of her own charity,' said the Paduan, 'not merely in giving of alms, in which I

know she is not deficient, but in judging the character of others; and let her oblige Baptista Damiotti by believing him honest, till she shall discover him to be a knave. Do not be surprised, madam, if I speak in answer to your thoughts rather than your expressions, and tell me once more whether you have courage to look on what I am prepared to show?'

'I own, sir,' said Lady Bothwell, 'that your words strike me with some sense of fear; but whatever my sister desires to witness, I will not shrink from witnessing along with her.'

'Nay, the danger only consists in the risk of your resolution failing you. The sight can only last for the space of seven minutes; and should you interrupt the vision by speaking a single word, not only would the charm be broken, but some danger might result to the spectators. But if you can remain steadily silent for the seven minutes, your curiosity will be gratified without the slightest risk; and for this I will engage my honour.'

Internally Lady Bothwell thought the security was but an indifferent one; but she suppressed the suspicion, as if she had believed that the adept, whose dark features wore a half-formed smile, could in reality read even her most secret reflections. A solemn pause then ensued, until Lady Forester gathered courage enough to reply to the physician, as he termed himself, that she would abide with firmness and silence the sight which he had promised to exhibit to them. Upon this, he made them a low obeisance, and saying he went to prepare matters to meet their wish, left the apartment. The two sisters, hand in hand, as if seeking by that close union to divert any danger which might threaten them, sat down on two seats in immediate contact with each other — Jemima seeking support in the manly and habitual courage of Lady Bothwell; and she, on the other hand, more agitated than she had expected, endeavouring to fortify herself by the desperate resolution which circumstances had forced her sister to assume. The one perhaps said to herself, that her sister never feared anything; and the other might reflect, that what so feeble a minded woman as Jemima did not fear, could not properly be a subject of apprehension to a person of firmness and resolution like her own.

In a few moments the thoughts of both were diverted from their own situation by a strain of music so singularly sweet and solemn that, while it seemed calculated to avert or dispel any feeling unconnected with its harmony, increased, at the same time, the solemn excitation which the preceding interview

was calculated to produce. The music was that of some instrument with which they were unacquainted; but circumstances afterwards led my ancestress to believe that it was that of the harmonica, which she heard at a much later period in life.

When these heaven-born sounds had ceased, a door opened in the upper end of the apartment, and they saw Damiotti, standing at the head of two or three steps, sign to them to advance. His dress was so different from that which he had worn a few minutes before, that they could hardly recognise him; and the deadly paleness of his countenance, and a certain stern rigidity of muscles, like that of one whose mind is made up to some strange and daring action, had totally changed the somewhat sarcastic expression with which he had previously regarded them both, and particularly Lady Bothwell. He was barefooted, excepting a species of sandals in the antique fashion; his legs were naked beneath the knees; above them he wore hose, and a doublet of dark crimson silk close to his body; and over that a flowing loose robe, something resembling a surplice, of snow-white linen; his throat and neck were uncovered; and his long, straight, black hair was carefully combed down at full length.

As the ladies approached at his bidding, he showed no gesture of that ceremonious courtesy of which he had been formerly lavish. On the contrary, he made the signal of advance with an air of command; and when, arm in arm, and with insecure steps, the sisters approached the spot where he stood, it was with a warning frown that he pressed his finger to his lips, as if reiterating his condition of absolute silence, while, stalking before them, he led the way into the next apartment.

This was a large room, hung with black, as if for a funeral. At the upper end was a table, or rather a species of altar, covered with the same lugubrious colour, on which lay divers objects resembling the usual implements of sorcery. These objects were not indeed visible as they advanced into the apartment; for the light which displayed them, being only that of two expiring lamps, was extremely faint. The master — to use the Italian phrase for persons of this description — approached the upper end of the room, with a genuflexion like that of a Catholic to the crucifix, and at the same time crossed himself. The ladies followed in silence, and arm in arm. Two or three low broad steps led to a platform in front of the altar, or what resembled such. Here the sage took his stand, and placed the ladies beside him, once more earnestly repeating by signs his injunctions of silence. The Italian then, extending his bare arm

from under his linen vestment, pointed with his forefinger to five large flambeaux, or torches, placed on each side of the altar. They took fire successively at the approach of his hand, or rather of his finger, and spread a strong light through the room. By this the visitors could discern that, on the seeming altar, were disposed two naked swords laid crosswise; a large open book, which they conceived to be a copy of the Holy Scriptures, but in a language to them unknown; and beside this mysterious volume was placed a human skull. But what struck the sisters most was a very tall and broad mirror, which occupied all the space behind the altar, and, illumined by the lighted torches, reflected the mysterious articles which were laid upon it.

The master then placed himself between the two ladies, and, pointing to the mirror, took each by the hand, but without speaking a syllable. They gazed intently on the polished and sable space to which he had directed their attention. Suddenly the surface assumed a new and singular appearance. It no longer simply reflected the objects placed before it, but, as if it had self-contained scenery of its own, objects began to appear within it, at first in a disorderly, indistinct, and miscellaneous manner, like form arranging itself out of chaos, at length in distinct and defined shape and symmetry. It was thus that, after some shifting of light and darkness over the face of the wonderful glass, a long perspective of arches and columns began to arrange itself on its sides, and a vaulted roof on the upper part of it; till, after many oscillations, the whole vision gained a fixed and stationary appearance, representing the interior of a foreign church. The pillars were stately, and hung with scutcheons; the arches were lofty and magnificent; the floor was lettered with funeral inscriptions. But there were no separate shrines, no images, no display of chalice or crucifix on the altar. It was, therefore, a Protestant church upon the continent. A clergyman dressed in the Geneva gown and band stood by the communion-table, and, with the Bible opened before him, and his clerk awaiting in the background, seemed prepared to perform some service of the church to which he belonged.

At length, there entered the middle aisle of the building a numerous party, which appeared to be a bridal one, as a lady and gentleman walked first, hand in hand, followed by a large concourse of persons of both sexes, gaily, nay richly, attired. The bride, whose features they could distinctly see, seemed not more than sixteen years old, and extremely beautiful. The

bridegroom, for some seconds, moved rather with his shoulder towards them and his face averted; but his elegance of form and step struck the sisters at once with the same apprehension. As he turned his face suddenly, it was frightfully realised, and they saw, in the gay bridegroom before them, Sir Philip Forester. His wife uttered an imperfect exclamation, at the sound of which the whole scene stirred and seemed to separate.

'I could compare it to nothing,' said Lady Bothwell, while recounting the wonderful tale, 'but to the dispersion of the reflection offered by a deep and calm pool when a stone is suddenly cast into it, and the shadows become dissipated and broken.'

The master pressed both the ladies' hands severely, as if to remind them of their promise, and of the danger which they incurred. The exclamation died away on Lady Forester's tongue without attaining perfect utterance, and the scene in the glass, after the fluctuation of a minute, again resumed to the eye its former appearance of a real scene, existing within the mirror, as if represented in a picture, save that the figures were movable instead of being stationary.

The representation of Sir Philip Forester, now distinctly visible in form and feature, was seen to lead on towards the clergyman that beautiful girl, who advanced at once with diffidence and with a species of affectionate pride. In the meantime, and just as the clergyman had arranged the bridal company before him, and seemed about to commence the service, another group of persons, of whom two or three were officers, entered the church. They moved, at first, forward, as though they came to witness the bridal ceremony, but suddenly one of the officers, whose back was towards the spectators, detached himself from his companions, and rushed hastily towards the marriage party, when the whole of them turned towards him, as if attracted by some exclamation which had accompanied his advance. Suddenly the intruder drew his sword; the bridegroom unsheathed his own and made towards him; swords were also drawn by other individuals, both of the marriage party and of those who had last entered. They fell into a sort of confusion, the clergyman and some elder and graver persons labouring apparently to keep the peace, while the hotter spirits on both sides brandished their weapons. But now the period of the brief space during which the soothsayer, as he pr[illegible]ended, was permitted to exhibit his art was arrived. The fumes again mixed together, and dissolved gradually from observation; the vaults and columns of the church rolled asunder and disap-

peared; and the front of the mirror reflected nothing save the blazing torches and the melancholy apparatus placed on the altar or table before it.

The doctor led the ladies, who greatly required his support, into the apartment from whence they came; where wine, essences, and other means of restoring suspended animation had been provided during his absence. He motioned them to chairs, which they occupied in silence; Lady Forester, in particular, wringing her hands and casting her eyes up to heaven, but without speaking a word, as if the spell had been still before her eyes.

'And what we have seen is even now acting?' said Lady Bothwell, collecting herself with difficulty.

'That,' answered Baptista Damiotti, 'I cannot justly, or with certainty, say. But it is either now acting or has been acted during a short space before this. It is the last remarkable transaction in which the Cavalier Forester has been engaged.'

Lady Bothwell then expressed anxiety concerning her sister, whose altered countenance and apparent unconsciousness of what passed around her excited her apprehensions how it might be possible to convey her home.

'I have prepared for that,' answered the adept: 'I have directed the servant to bring your equipage as near to this place as the narrowness of the street will permit. Fear not for your sister; but give her, when you return home, this composing-draught, and she will be better to-morrow morning. Few,' he added, in a melancholy tone, 'leave this house as well in health as they entered it. Such being the consequence of seeking knowledge by mysterious means, I leave you to judge the condition of those who have the power of gratifying such irregular curiosity. Farewell, and forget not the potion.'

'I will give her nothing that comes from you,' said Lady Bothwell: 'I have seen enough of your art already. Perhaps you would poison us both to conceal your own necromancy. But we are persons who want neither the means of making our wrongs known nor the assistance of friends to right them.'

'You have had no wrongs from me, madam,' said the adept. 'You sought one who is little grateful for such honour. He seeks no one, and only gives responses to those who invite and call upon him. After all, you have but learned a little sooner the evil which you must still be doomed to endure. I hear your servant's step at the door, and will detain your ladyship

and Lady Forester no longer. The next packet from the continent will explain what you have already partly witnessed. Let it not, if I may advise, pass too suddenly into your sister's hands.'

So saying, he bid Lady Bothwell good-night. She went, lighted by the adept, to the vestibule, where he hastily threw a black cloak over his singular dress, and opening the door, entrusted his visitors to the care of the servant. It was with difficulty that Lady Bothwell sustained her sister to the carriage, though it was only twenty steps distant.

When they arrived at home, Lady Forester required medical assistance. The physician of the family attended, and shook his head on feeling her pulse.

'Here has been,' he said, 'a violent and sudden shock on the nerves. I must know how it has happened.'

Lady Bothwell admitted they had visited the conjurer, and that Lady Forester had received some bad news respecting her husband, Sir Philip.

'That rascally quack would make my fortune were he to stay in Edinburgh,' said the graduate: 'this is the seventh nervous case I have heard of his making for me, and all by effect of terror.' He next examined the composing-draught which Lady Bothwell had unconsciously brought in her hand, tasted it, and pronounced it very germain to the matter, and what would save an application to the apothecary. He then paused, and looking at Lady Bothwell very significantly, at length added, 'I suppose I must not ask your ladyship anything about this Italian warlock's proceedings?'

'Indeed, Doctor,' answered Lady Bothwell, 'I consider what passed as confidential; and though the man may be a rogue, yet, as we were fools enough to consult him, we should, I think, be honest enough to keep his counsel.'

'*May* be a knave; come,' said the Doctor, 'I am glad to hear your ladyship allows such a possibility in anything that comes from Italy.'

'What comes from Italy may be as good as what comes from Hanover, Doctor. But you and I will remain good friends, and that it may be so, we will say nothing of Whig and Tory.'

'Not I,' said the Doctor, receiving his fee, and taking his hat; 'a Carolus serves my purpose as well as a Willielmus. But I should like to know why old Lady St. Ringan's, and all that set, go about wasting their decayed lungs in puffing this foreign fellow.'

'Ay, you had best "set him down a Jesuit," as Scrub says.' On these terms they parted.

The poor patient, whose nerves, from an extraordinary state of tension, had at length become relaxed in as extraordinary a degree, continued to struggle with a sort of imbecility, the growth of superstitious terror, when the shocking tidings were brought from Holland which fulfilled even her worst expectations.

They were sent by the celebrated Earl of Stair, and contained the melancholy event of a duel betwixt Sir Philip Forester and his wife's half-brother, Captain Falconer, of the Scotch Dutch, as they were then called, in which the latter had been killed. The cause of quarrel rendered the incident still more shocking. It seemed that Sir Philip had left the army suddenly, in consequence of being unable to pay a very considerable sum, which he had lost to another volunteer at play. He had changed his name, and taken up his residence at Rotterdam, where he had insinuated himself into the good graces of an ancient and rich burgomaster, and, by his handsome person and graceful manners, captivated the affections of his only child, a very young person, of great beauty, and the heiress of much wealth. Delighted with the specious attractions of his proposed son-in-law, the wealthy merchant, whose idea of the British character was too high to admit of his taking any precaution to acquire evidence of his condition and circumstances, gave his consent to the marriage. It was about to be celebrated in the principal church of the city, when it was interrupted by a singular occurrence.

Captain Falconer having been detached to Rotterdam to bring up a part of the brigade of Scottish auxiliaries, who were in quarters there, a person of consideration in the town, to whom he had been formerly known, proposed to him for amusement to go to the high church to see a countryman of his own married to the daughter of a wealthy burgomaster. Captain Falconer went accordingly, accompanied by his Dutch acquaintance, with a party of his friends, and two or three officers of the Scotch brigade. His astonishment may be conceived when he saw his own brother-in-law, a married man, on the point of leading to the altar the innocent and beautiful creature, upon whom he was about to practise a base and unmanly deceit. He proclaimed his villainy on the spot, and the marriage was interrupted of course. But against the opinion of more thinking men, who considered Sir Philip Forester as having thrown him-

self out of the rank of men of honour, Captain Falconer admitted him to the privilege of such, accepted a challenge from him, and in the rencounter received a mortal wound. Such are the ways of Heaven, mysterious in our eyes.

Lady Forester never recovered the shock of this dismal intelligence.

'And did this tragedy,' said I, 'take place exactly at the time when the scene in the mirror was exhibited?'

'It is hard to be obliged to maim one's story,' answered my aunt; 'but to speak the truth, it happened some days sooner than the apparition was exhibited.'

'And so there remained a possibility,' said I, 'that by some secret and speedy communication the artist might have received early intelligence of that incident.'

'The incredulous pretended so,' replied my aunt.

'What became of the adept?' demanded I.

'Why, a warrant came down shortly afterwards to arrest him for high treason, as an agent of the Chevalier St. George; and Lady Bothwell, recollecting the hints which had escaped the Doctor, an ardent friend of the Protestant succession, did then call to remembrance that this man was chiefly *prôné* among the ancient matrons of her own political persuasion. It certainly seemed probable that intelligence from the continent, which could easily have been transmitted by an active and powerful agent, might have enabled him to prepare such a scene of phantasmagoria as she had herself witnessed. Yet there were so many difficulties in assigning a natural explanation, that, to the day of her death, she remained in great doubt on the subject, and much disposed to cut the Gordian knot, by admitting the existence of supernatural agency.'

'But, my dear aunt,' said I, 'what became of the man of skill?'

'Oh, he was too good a fortune-teller not to be able to foresee that his own destiny would be tragical if he waited the arrival of the man with the silver greyhound upon his sleeve. He made, as we say, a moonlight flitting, and was nowhere to be seen or heard of. Some noise there was about papers or letters found in the house, but it died away, and Doctor Baptista Damiotti was soon as little talked of as Galen or Hippocrates.'

'And Sir Philip Forester,' said I, 'did he too vanish for ever from the public scene?'

'No,' replied my kind informer. 'He was heard of once

more, and it was upon a remarkable occasion. It is said that we Scots, when there was such a nation in existence, have, among our full peck of virtues, one or two little barleycorns of vice. In particular, it is alleged that we rarely forgive, and never forget, any injuries received; that we used to make an idol of our resentment, as poor Lady Constance did of her grief; and are addicted, as Burns says, to "Nursing our wrath to keep it warm." Lady Bothwell was not without this feeling; and, I believe, nothing whatever, scarce the restoration of the Stuart line, could have happened so delicious to her feelings as an opportunity of being revenged on Sir Philip Forester for the deep and double injury which had deprived her of a sister and of a brother. But nothing of him was heard or known till many a year had passed away.

'At length — it was on a Fastern's E'en (Shrovetide) assembly, at which the whole fashion of Edinburgh attended, full and frequent, and when Lady Bothwell had a seat amongst the lady patronesses, that one of the attendants on the company whispered into her ear that a gentleman wished to speak with her in private.

'"In private, and in an assembly room! he must be mad; tell him to call upon me to-morrow morning."

'"I said so, my lady," answered the man, "but he desired me to give you this paper."

'She undid the billet, which was curiously folded and sealed. It only bore the words, "On business of life and death," written in a hand which she had never seen before. Suddenly it occurred to her that it might concern the safety of some of her political friends; she therefore followed the messenger to a small apartment where the refreshments were prepared, and from which the general company was excluded. She found an old man, who at her approach rose up and bowed profoundly. His appearance indicated a broken constitution, and his dress, though sedulously rendered conforming to the etiquette of a ball-room, was worn and tarnished, and hung in folds about his emaciated person. Lady Bothwell was about to feel for her purse, expecting to get rid of the supplicant at the expense of a little money, but some fear of a mistake arrested her purpose. She therefore gave the man leisure to explain himself.

'"I have the honour to speak with the Lady Bothwell?"

'"I am Lady Bothwell; allow me to say that this is no time or place for long explanations. What are your commands with me?"

'"Your ladyship," said the old man, "had once a sister."

'"True; whom I loved as my own soul."

'"And a brother."

'"The bravest, the kindest, the most affectionate," said Lady Bothwell.

'"Both these beloved relatives you lost by the fault of an unfortunate man," continued the stranger.

'"By the crime of an unnatural, bloody-minded murderer," said the lady.

'"I am answered," replied the old man, bowing, as if to withdraw.

'"Stop, sir, I command you," said Lady Bothwell. "Who are you, that, at such a place and time, come to recall these horrible recollections? I insist upon knowing."

'"I am one who means Lady Bothwell no injury; but, on the contrary, to offer her the means of doing a deed of Christian charity, which the world would wonder at, and which Heaven would reward; but I find her in no temper for such a sacrifice as I was prepared to ask."

'"Speak out, sir; what is your meaning?" said Lady Bothwell.

'"The wretch that has wronged you so deeply," rejoined the stranger, "is now on his death-bed. His days have been days of misery, his nights have been sleepless hours of anguish; yet he cannot die without your forgiveness. His life has been an unremitting penance; yet he dares not part from his burden while your curses load his soul."

'"Tell him," said Lady Bothwell, sternly, "to ask pardon of that Being whom he has so greatly offended, not of an erring mortal like himself. What could my forgiveness avail him?"

'"Much," answered the old man. "It will be an earnest of that which he may then venture to ask from his Creator, lady, and from yours. Remember, Lady Bothwell, you too have a death-bed to look forward to; your soul may — all human souls must — feel the awe of facing the judgment-seat, with the wounds of an untented conscience, raw and rankling — what thought would it be then that should whisper, 'I have given no mercy, how then shall I ask it?'"

'"Man, whosoever thou mayst be," replied Lady Bothwell, "urge me not so cruelly. It would be but blasphemous hypocrisy to utter with my lips the words which every throb of my heart protests against. They would open the earth and give to light the wasted form of my sister, the bloody form of my murdered brother. Forgive him! Never — never."

'"Great God!" cried the old man, holding up his hands, "is it thus the worms which thou hast called out of dust obey the commands of their Maker? Farewell, proud and unforgiving woman. Exult that thou hast added to a death in want and pain the agonies of religious despair; but never again mock Heaven by petitioning for the pardon which thou hast refused to grant."

'He was turning from her.

'"Stop," she exclaimed; "I will try — yes, I will try to pardon him."

'"Gracious lady," said the old man, "you will relieve the overburdened soul which dare not sever itself from its sinful companion of earth without being at peace with you. What do I know — your forgiveness may perhaps preserve for penitence the dregs of a wretched life."

'"Ha!" said the lady, as a sudden light broke on her, "it is the villain himself." And grasping Sir Philip Forester, for it was he, and no other, by the collar, she raised a cry of "Murder — murder! seize the murderer!"

'At an exclamation so singular, in such a place, the company thronged into the apartment; but Sir Philip Forester was no longer there. He had forcibly extricated himself from Lady Bothwell's hold, and had run out of the apartment, which opened on the landing-place of the stair. There seemed no escape in that direction, for there were several persons coming up the steps, and others descending. But the unfortunate man was desperate. He threw himself over the balustrade, and alighted safely in the lobby, though a leap of fifteen feet at least, then dashed into the street, and was lost in darkness. Some of the Bothwell family made pursuit, and had they come up with the fugitive they might have perhaps slain him; for in those days men's blood ran warm in their veins. But the police did not interfere, the matter most criminal having happened long since, and in a foreign land. Indeed, it was always thought that this extraordinary scene originated in a hypocritical experiment, by which Sir Philip desired to ascertain whether he might return to his native country in safety from the resentment of a family which he had injured so deeply. As the result fell out so contrary to his wishes, he is believed to have returned to the continent, and there died in exile.'

So closed the tale of the MYSTERIOUS MIRROR.

THE TAPESTRIED CHAMBER

OR

THE LADY IN THE SACQUE

INTRODUCTION

THIS is another little story from *The Keepsake* of 1828. It was told to me many years ago by the late Miss Anna Seward, who, among other accomplishments that rendered her an amusing inmate in a country house, had that of recounting narratives of this sort with very considerable effect; much greater, indeed, than any one would be apt to guess from the style of her written performances. There are hours and moods when most people are not displeased to listen to such things; and I have heard some of the greatest and wisest of my contemporaries take their share in telling them.

August 1831.

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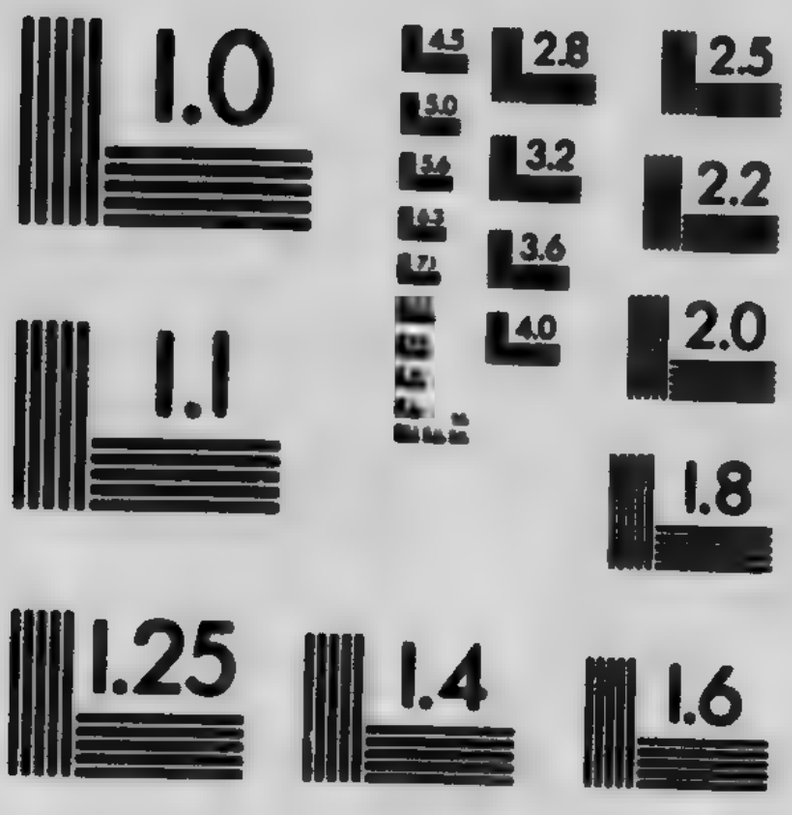

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THE

TAPESTRIED CHAMBER

OR THE LADY IN THE SACQUE

THE following narrative is given from the pen, so far as memory permits, in the same character in which it was presented to the Author's ear; nor has he claim to further praise, or to be more deeply censured, than in proportion to the good or bad judgment which he has employed in selecting his materials, as he has studiously avoided any attempt at ornament which might interfere with the simplicity of the tale.

At the same time it must be admitted, that the particular class of stories which turns on the marvellous possesses a stronger influence when told than when committed to print. The volume taken up at noonday, though rehearsing the same incidents, conveys a much more feeble impression than is achieved by the voice of the speaker on a circle of fireside auditors, who hang upon the narrative as the narrator details the minute incidents which serve to give it authenticity, and lowers his voice with an affectation of mystery while he approaches the fearful and wonderful part. It was with such advantages that the present writer heard the following events related, more than twenty years since, by the celebrated Miss Seward of Litchfield, who to her numerous accomplishments added, in a remarkable degree, the power of narrative in private conversation. In its present form the tale must necessarily lose all the interest which was attached to it by the flexible voice and intelligent features of the gifted narrator. Yet still, read aloud, to an undoubting audience by the doubtful light of the closing evening, or, in silence, by a decaying taper, and amidst the solitude of a half-lighted apartment, it may redeem its character as a good ghost-story. Miss Seward always

affirmed that she had derived her information from an authentic source, although she suppressed the names of the two persons chiefly concerned. I will not avail myself of any particulars I may have since received concerning the localities of the detail, but suffer them to rest under the same general description in which they were first related to me; and, for the same reason, I will not add to, or diminish, the narrative by any circumstance, whether more or less material, but simply rehearse, as I heard it, a story of supernatural terror.

About the end of the American war, when the officers of Lord Cornwallis's army, which surrendered at Yorktown, and others, who had been made prisoners during the impolitic and ill-fated controversy, were returning to their own country, to relate their adventures and repose themselves after their fatigues, there was amongst them a general officer, to whom Miss S. gave the name of Browne, but merely, as I understood, to save the inconvenience of introducing a nameless agent in the narrative. He was an officer of merit, as well as a gentleman of high consideration for family and attainments.

Some business had carried General Browne upon a tour through the western counties, when, in the conclusion of a morning stage, he found himself in the vicinity of a small country town, which presented a scene of uncommon beauty, and of a character peculiarly English.

The little town, with its stately old church, whose tower bore testimony to the devotion of ages long past, lay amidst pastures and corn-fields of small extent, but bounded and divided with hedgerow timber of great age and size. There were few marks of modern improvement. The environs of the place intimated neither the solitude of decay nor the bustle of novelty; the houses were old, but in good repair; and the beautiful little river murmured freely on its way to the left of the town, neither restrained by a dam nor bordered by a towing-path.

Upon a gentle eminence, nearly a mile to the southward of the town, were seen, amongst many venerable oaks and tangled thickets, the turrets of a castle, as old as the wars of York and Lancaster, but which seemed to have received important alterations during the age of Elizabeth and her successor. It had not been a place of great size; but whatever accommodation it formerly afforded was, it must be supposed, still to be obtained within its walls; at least, such was the inference which General Browne drew from observing the smoke arise merrily from

several of the ancient wreathed and carved chimney-stalks. The wall of the park ran alongside of the highway for two or three hundred yards; and through the different points by which the eye found glimpses into the woodland scenery it seemed to be well stocked. Other points of view opened in succession — now a full one of the front of the old castle, and now a side glimpse at its particular towers, the former rich in all the bizarrerie of the Elizabethan school, while the simple and solid strength of other parts of the building seemed to show that they had been raised more for defence than ostentation.

Delighted with the partial glimpses which he obtained of the castle through the woods and glades by which this ancient feudal fortress was surrounded, our military traveller was determined to inquire whether it might not deserve a nearer view, and whether it contained family pictures or other objects of curiosity worthy of a stranger's visit, when, leaving the vicinity of the park, he rolled through a clean and well-paved street, and stopped at the door of a well-frequented inn.

Before ordering horses to proceed on his journey, General Browne made inquiries concerning the proprietor of the chateau which had so attracted his admiration; and was equally surprised and pleased at hearing in reply a nobleman named whom we shall call Lord Woodville. How fortunate! Much of Browne's early recollections, both at school and at college, had been connected with young Woodville, whom, by a few questions, he now ascertained to be the same with the owner of this fair domain. He had been raised to the peerage by the decease of his father a few months before, and, as the General learned from the landlord, the term of mourning being ended, was now taking possession of his paternal estate, in the jovial season of merry autumn, accompanied by a select party of friends, to enjoy the sports of a country famous for game.

This was delightful news to our traveller. Frank Woodville had been Richard Browne's fag at Eton, and his chosen intimate at Christ Church; their pleasures and their tasks had been the same; and the honest soldier's heart warmed to find his early friend in possession of so delightful a residence, and of an estate, as the landlord assured him with a nod and a wink, fully adequate to maintain and add to his dignity. Nothing was more natural than that the traveller should suspend a journey which there was nothing to render hurried to pay a visit to an old friend under such agreeable circumstances.

The fresh horses, therefore, had only the brief task of con-

veying the General's travelling-carriage to Woodville Castle. A porter admitted them at a modern Gothic lodge, built in that style to correspond with the castle itself, and at the same time rang a bell to give warning of the approach of visitors. Apparently the sound of the bell had suspended the separation of the company, bent on the various amusements of the morning; for, on entering the court of the chateau, several young men were lounging about in their sporting-dresses, looking at and criticising the dogs, which the keepers held in readiness to attend their pastime. As General Browne alighted, the young lord came to the gate of the hall, and for an instant gazed, as at a stranger, upon the countenance of his friend, on which war, with its fatigues and its wounds, had made a great alteration. But the uncertainty lasted no longer than till the visitor had spoken, and the hearty greeting which followed was such as can only be exchanged betwixt those who have passed together the merry days of careless boyhood or early youth.

'If I could have formed a wish, my dear Browne,' said Lord Woodville, 'it would have been to have you here, of all men, upon this occasion, which my friends are good enough to hold as a sort of holiday. Do not think you have been unwatched during the years you have been absent from us. I have traced you through your dangers, your triumphs, your misfortunes, and was delighted to see that, whether in victory or defeat, the name of my old friend was always distinguished with applause.'

The General made a suitable reply, and congratulated his friend on his new dignities, and the possession of a place and domain so beautiful.

'Nay, you have seen nothing of it as yet,' said Lord Woodville, 'and I trust you do not mean to leave us till you are better acquainted with it. It is true, I confess, that my present party is pretty large, and the old house, like other places of the kind, does not possess so much accommodation as the extent of the outward walls appears to promise. But we can give you a comfortable old-fashioned room, and I venture to suppose that your campaigns have taught you to be glad of worse quarters.'

The General shrugged his shoulders and laughed. 'I presume,' he said, 'the worst apartment in your chateau is considerably superior to the old tobacco-cask in which I was fain to take up my night's lodging when I was in the bush, as the Virginians call it, with the light corps. There I lay, like Diogenes himself, so delighted with my covering from the elements, that I made a vain attempt to have it rolled on to

my next quarters; but my commander for the time would give way to no such luxurious provision, and I took farewell of my beloved cask with tears in my eyes.'

'Well, then, since you do not fear your quarters,' said Lord Woodville, 'you will stay with me a week at least. Of guns, dogs, fishing-rods, flies, and means of sport by sea and land, we have enough and to spare: you cannot pitch on an amusement but we will find the means of pursuing it. But if you prefer the gun and pointers, I will go with you myself, and see whether you have mended your shooting since you have been amongst the Indians of the back settlements.'

The General gladly accepted his friendly host's proposal in all its points. After a morning of manly exercise, the company met at dinner, where it was the delight of Lord Woodville to conduce to the display of the high properties of his recovered friend, so as to recommend him to his guests, most of whom were persons of distinction. He led General Browne to speak of the scenes he had witnessed; and as every word marked alike the brave officer and the sensible man, who retained possession of his cool judgment under the most imminent dangers, the company looked upon the soldier with general respect, as on one who had proved himself possessed of an uncommon portion of personal courage — that attribute, of all others, of which everybody desires to be thought possessed.

The day at Woodville Castle ended as usual in such mansions. The hospitality stopped within the limits of good order; music, in which the young lord was a proficient, succeeded to the circulation of the bottle; cards and billiards, for those who preferred such amusements, were in readiness; but the exercise of the morning required early hours, and not long after eleven o'clock the guests began to retire to their several apartments.

The young lord himself conducted his friend, General Browne, to the chamber destined for him, which answered the description he had given of it, being comfortable, but old-fashioned. The bed was of the massive form used in the end of the 17th century, and the curtains of faded silk, heavily trimmed with tarnished gold. But then the sheets, pillows, and blankets looked delightful to the campaigner, when he thought of his 'mansion, the cask.' There was an air of gloom in the tapestry hangings which, with their worn-out graces, curtained the walls of the little chamber, and gently undulated as the autumnal breeze found its way through the ancient lattice-window, which pattered and whistled as the air gained entrance. The toilet

too, with its mirror, turbaned, after the manner of the beginning of the century, with a coiffure of murrey-coloured silk, and its hundred strange-shaped boxes, providing for arrangements which had been obsolete for more than fifty years, had an antique, and in so far a melancholy, aspect. But nothing could blaze more brightly and cheerfully than the two large wax candles; or if aught could rival them, it was the flaming, bickering fagots in the chimney, that sent at once their gleam and their warmth through the snug apartment, which, notwithstanding the general antiquity of its appearance, was not wanting in the least convenience that modern habits rendered either necessary or desirable.

'This is an old-fashioned sleeping-apartment, General,' said the young lord; 'but I hope you find nothing that makes you envy your old tobacco-cask.'

'I am not particular respecting my lodgings,' replied the General; 'yet were I to make any choice, I would prefer this chamber by many degrees to the gayer and more modern rooms of your family mansion. Believe me, that when I unite its modern air of comfort with its venerable antiquity, and recollect that it is your lordship's property, I shall feel in better quarters here than if I were in the best hotel London could afford.'

'I trust — I have no doubt — that you will find yourself as comfortable as I wish you, my dear General,' said the young nobleman; and once more bidding his guest good-night, he shook him by the hand and withdrew.

The General once more looked round him, and internally congratulating himself on his return to peaceful life, the comforts of which were endeared by the recollection of the hardships and dangers he had lately sustained, undressed himself, and prepared for a luxurious night's rest.

Here, contrary to the custom of this species of tale, we leave the General in possession of his apartment until the next morning.

The company assembled for breakfast at an early hour, but without the appearance of General Browne, who seemed the guest that Lord Woodville was desirous of honouring above all whom his hospitality had assembled around him. He more than once expressed surprise at the General's absence, and at length sent a servant to make inquiry after him. The man brought back information that General Browne had been walking abroad since an early hour of the morning, in defiance of the weather, which was misty and ungenial.

'The custom of a soldier,' said the young nobleman to his friends: 'many of them acquire habitual vigilance, and cannot sleep after the early hour at which their duty usually commands them to be alert.'

Yet the explanation which Lord Woodville thus offered to the company seemed hardly satisfactory to his own mind, and it was in a fit of silence and abstraction that he awaited the return of the General. It took place near an hour after the breakfast bell had rung. He looked fatigued and feverish. His hair, the powdering and arrangement of which was at this time one of the most important occupations of a man's whole day, and marked his fashion as much as, in the present time, the tying of a cravat, or the want of one, was dishevelled, uncurled, void of powder, and dank with dew. His clothes were huddled on with a careless negligence remarkable in a military man, whose real or supposed duties are usually held to include some attention to the toilet; and his looks were haggard and ghastly in a peculiar degree.

'So you have stolen a march upon us this morning, my dear General,' said Lord Woodville; 'or you have not found your bed so much to your mind as I had hoped and you seemed to expect. How did you rest last night?'

'Oh, excellently well — remarkably well — never better in my life!' said General Browne rapidly, and yet with an air of embarrassment which was obvious to his friend. He then hastily swallowed a cup of tea, and, neglecting or refusing whatever else was offered, seemed to fall into a fit of abstraction.

'You will take the gun to-day, General?' said his friend and host, but had to repeat the question twice ere he received the abrupt answer, 'No, my lord; I am sorry I cannot have the pleasure of spending another day with your lordship: my post-horses are ordered, and will be here directly.'

All who were present showed surprise, and Lord Woodville immediately replied, 'Post-horses, my good friend! what can you possibly want with them, when you promised to stay with me quietly for at least a week?'

'I believe,' said the General, obviously much embarrassed, 'that I might, in the pleasure of my first meeting with your lordship, have said something about stopping here a few days; but I have since found it altogether impossible.'

'That is very extraordinary,' answered the young nobleman. 'You seemed quite disengaged yesterday, and you cannot have had a summons to-day; for our post has not come

up from the town, and therefore you cannot have received any letters.'

General Browne, without giving any further explanation, muttered something of indispensable business, and insisted on the absolute necessity of his departure in a manner which silenced all opposition on the part of his host, who saw that his resolution was taken, and forbore all further importunity.

'At least, however,' he said, 'permit me, my dear Browne, since go you will or must, to show you the view from the terrace, which the mist, that is now rising, will soon display.'

He threw open a sash-window and stepped down upon the terrace as he spoke. The General followed him mechanically, but seemed little to attend to what his host was saying, as, looking across an extended and rich prospect, he pointed out the different objects worthy of observation. Thus they moved on till Lord Woodville had attained his purpose of drawing his guest entirely apart from the rest of the company, when, turning round upon him with an air of great solemnity, he addressed him thus:

'Richard Browne, my old and very dear friend, we are now alone. Let me conjure you to answer me upon the word of a friend and the honour of a soldier. How did you in reality rest during last night?'

'Most wretchedly indeed, my lord,' answered the General, in the same tone of solemnity; 'so miserably, that I would not run the risk of such a second night, not only for all the lands belonging to this castle, but for all the country which I see from this elevated point of view.'

'This is most extraordinary,' said the young lord, as if speaking to himself; 'then there must be something in the reports concerning that apartment.' Again turning to the General, he said, 'For God's sake, my dear friend, be candid with me, and let me know the disagreeable particulars which have befallen you under a roof where, with consent of the owner, you should have met nothing save comfort.'

The General seemed distressed by this appeal, and paused a moment before he replied. 'My dear lord,' he at length said, 'what happened to me last night is of a nature so peculiar and so unpleasant, that I could hardly bring myself to detail it even to your lordship, were it not that, independent of my wish to gratify any request of yours, I think that sincerity on my part may lead to some explanation about a circumstance equally painful and mysterious. To others, the communication I am

about to make might place me in the light of a weak-minded, superstitious fool, who suffered his own imagination to delude and bewilder him; but you have known me in childhood and youth, and will not suspect me of having adopted in manhood the feelings and frailties from which my early years were free.' Here he paused, and his friend replied.

'Do not doubt my perfect confidence in the truth of your communication, however strange it may be,' replied Lord Woodville: 'I know your firmness of disposition too well to suspect you could be made the object of imposition, and am aware that your honour and your friendship will equally deter you from exaggerating whatever you may have witnessed.'

'Well, then,' said the General, 'I will proceed with my story as well as I can, relying upon your candour, and yet distinctly feeling that I would rather face a battery than recall to my mind the odious recollections of last night.'

He paused a second time, and then perceiving that Lord Woodville remained silent and in an attitude of attention, he commenced, though not without obvious reluctance, the history of his night adventures in the Tapestried Chamber.

'I undressed and went to bed, so soon as your lordship left me yesterday evening; but the wood in the chimney, which nearly fronted my bed, blazed brightly and cheerfully, and, aided by a hundred exciting recollections of my childhood and youth, which had been recalled by the unexpected pleasure of meeting your lordship, prevented me from falling immediately asleep. I ought, however, to say, that these reflections were all of a pleasant and agreeable kind, grounded on a sense of having for a time exchanged the labour, fatigues, and dangers of my profession for the enjoyments of a peaceful life, and the reunion of those friendly and affectionate ties which I had torn asunder at the rude summons of war.

'While such pleasing reflections were stealing over my mind, and gradually lulling me to slumber, I was suddenly aroused by a sound like that of the rustling of a silken gown, and the tapping of a pair of high-heeled shoes, as if a woman were walking in the apartment. Ere I could draw the curtain to see what the matter was, the figure of a little woman passed between the bed and the fire. The back of this form was turned to me, and I could observe, from the shoulders and neck, it was that of an old woman, whose dress was an old-fashioned gown, which, I think, ladies call a sacque — that is, a sort of robe completely loose in the body, but gathered into

broad plaits upon the neck and shoulders, which fall down to the ground, and terminate in a species of train.

'I thought the intrusion singular enough, but never harboured for a moment the idea that what I saw was anything more than the mortal form of some old woman about the establishment, who had a fancy to dress like her grandmother, and who, having perhaps, as your lordship mentioned that you were rather straitened for room, been dislodged from her chamber for my accommodation, had forgotten the circumstance, and returned by twelve to her old haunt. Under this persuasion I moved myself in bed and coughed a little, to make the intruder sensible of my being in possession of the premises. She turned slowly round, but, gracious Heaven! my lord, what a countenance did she display to me! There was no longer any question what she was, or any thought of her being a living being. Upon a face which wore the fixed features of a corpse were imprinted the traces of the vilest and most hideous passions which had animated her while she lived. The body of some atrocious criminal seemed to have been given up from the grave, and the soul restored from the penal fire, in order to form, for a space, an union with the ancient accomplice of its guilt. I started up in bed, and sat upright, supporting myself on my palms, as I gazed on this horrible spectre. The hag made, as it seemed, a single and swift stride to the bed where I lay, and squatted herself down upon it, in precisely the same attitude which I had assumed in the extremity of horror, advancing her dial[illegible]cal countenance within half a yard of mine, with a grin which seemed to intimate the malice and the derision of an incarnate fiend.'

Here General Browne stopped, and wiped from his brow the cold perspiration with which the recollection of his horrible vision had covered it.

'My lord,' he said, 'I am no coward. I have been in all the mortal dangers incidental to my profession, and I may truly boast that no man ever knew Richard Browne dishonour the sword he wears; but in these horrible circumstances, under the eyes, and, as it seemed, almost in the grasp, of an incarnation of an evil spirit, all firmness forsook me, all manhood melted from me like wax in the furnace, and I felt my hair individually bri[illegible] The current of my life-blood ceased to flow, and I sank back in a swoon, as very a victim to panic terror as ever was a village girl or a child of ten years old. How long I lay in this condition I cannot pretend to guess.

'But I was roused by the castle clock striking one, so loud that it seemed as if it were in the very room. It was some time before I dared open my eyes, lest they should again encounter the horrible spectacle. When, however, I summoned courage to look up, she was no longer visible. My first idea was to pull my bell, wake the servants, and remove to a garret or a hay-loft, to be ensured against a second visitation. Nay, I will confess the truth, that my resolution was altered, not by the shame of exposing myself, but by the fear that, as the bell-cord hung by the chimney, I might, in making my way to it, be again crossed by the fiendish hag, who, I figured to myself, might be still lurking about some corner of the apartment.

'I will not pretend to describe what hot and cold fever-fits tormented me for the rest of the night, through broken sleep, weary vigils, and that dubious state which forms the neutral ground between them An hundred terrible objects appeared to haunt me; but there was the great difference betwixt the vision which I have described and those which followed, that I knew the last to be deceptions of my own fancy and over-excited nerves.

'Day at last appeared, and I rose from my bed ill in health and humiliated in mind. I was ashamed of myself as a man and a soldier, and still more so at feeling my own extreme desire to escape from the haunted apartment, which, however, conquered all other considerations; so that, huddling on my clothes with the most careless haste, I made my escape from your lordship's mansion, to seek in the open air some relief to my nervous system, shaken as it was by this horrible rencounter with a visitant, for such I must believe her, from no other world. Your lordship has now heard the cause of my discomposure, and of my sudden desire to leave your hospitable castle. In other places I trust we may often meet; but God protect me from ever spending a second night under that roof!'

Strange as the General's tale was, he spoke with such a deep air of conviction, that it cut short all the usual commentaries which are made on such stories. Lord Woodville never once asked him if he was sure he did not dream of the apparition, or suggested any of the possibilities by which it is fashionable to explain supernatural appearances, as wild vagaries of the fancy or deceptions of the optic nerves. On the contrary, he seemed deeply impressed with the truth and reality of what he had heard; and, after a considerable pause, regretted, with

much appearance of sincerity, that his early friend should in his house have suffered so severely.

'I am the more sorry for your pain, my dear Browne,' he continued, 'that it is the unhappy, though most unexpected, result of an experiment of my own. You must know that, for my father and grandfather's time, at least, the apartment which was assigned to you last night had been shut on account of reports that it was disturbed by supernatural sights and noises. When I came, a few weeks since, into possession of the estate, I thought the accommodation which the castle afforded for my friends was not extensive enough to permit the inhabitants of the invisible world to retain possession of a comfortable sleeping-apartment. I therefore caused the Tapestried Chamber, as we call it, to be opened; and, without destroying its air of antiquity, I had such new articles of furniture placed in it as became the modern times. Yet, as the opinion that the room was haunted very strongly prevailed among the domestics, and was also known in the neighbourhood and to many of my friends, I feared some prejudice might be entertained by the first occupant of the Tapestried Chamber, which might tend to revive the evil report which it had laboured under, and so disappoint my purpose of rendering it an useful part of the house. I must confess, my dear Browne, that your arrival yesterday, agreeable to me for a thousand reasons besides, seemed the most favourable opportunity of removing the unpleasant rumours which attached to the room, since your courage was indubitable, and your mind free of any preoccupation on the subject. I could not, therefore, have chosen a more fitting subject for my experiment.'

'Upon my life,' said General Browne, somewhat hastily, 'I am infinitely obliged to your lordship — very particularly indebted indeed. I am likely to remember for some time the consequences of the experiment, as your lordship is pleased to call it.'

'Nay, now you are unjust, my dear friend,' said Lord Woodville. 'You have only to reflect for a single moment, in order to be convinced that I could not augur the possibility of the pain to which you have been so unhappily exposed. I was yesterday morning a complete sceptic on the subject of supernatural appearances. Nay, I am sure that, had I told you what was said about that room, those very reports would have induced you, by your own choice, to select it for your accommodation. It was my misfortune, perhaps my error, but really

cannot be termed my fault, that you have been afflicted so strangely.'

'Strangely indeed!' said the General, resuming his good temper; 'and I acknowledge that I have no right to be offended with your lordship for treating me like what I used to think myself, a man of some firmness and courage. But I see my post-horses are arrived, and I must not detain your lordship from your amusement.'

'Nay, my old friend,' said Lord Woodville, 'since you cannot stay with us another day, which, indeed, I can no longer urge, give me at least half an hour more. You used to love pictures, and I have a gallery of portraits, some of them by Vandyke, representing ancestry to whom this property and castle formerly belonged. I think that several of them will strike you as possessing merit.'

General Browne accepted the invitation, though somewhat unwillingly. It was evident he was not to breathe freely or at ease till he left Woodville Castle far behind him. He could not refuse his friend's invitation, however; and the less so, that he was a little ashamed of the peevishness which he had displayed towards his well-meaning entertainer.

The General, therefore, followed Lord Woodville through several rooms, into a long gallery hung with pictures, which the latter pointed out to his guest, telling the names, and giving some account, of the personages whose portraits presented themselves in progression. General Browne was but little interested in the details which these accounts conveyed to him. They were, indeed, of the kind which are usually found in an old family gallery. Here was a cavalier who had ruined the estate in the royal cause; there a fine lady who had reinstated it by contracting a match with a wealthy Roundhead. There hung a gallant who had been in danger for corresponding with the exiled court at St. Germain's; here one who had taken arms for William at the Revolution; and there a third that had thrown his weight alternately into the scale of Whig and Tory.

While Lord Woodville was cramming these words into his guest's ear, 'against the stomach of his sense,' they gained the middle of the gallery, when he beheld General Browne suddenly start, and assume an attitude of the utmost surprise, not unmixed with fear, as his eyes were caught and suddenly riveted by a portrait of an old lady in a sacque, the fashionable dress of the end of the 17th century.

'There she is!' he exclaimed — 'there she is, in form and

features, though inferior in demoniac expression to the accursed hag who visited me last night.'

'If that be the case,' said the young nobleman, 'there can remain no longer any doubt of the horrible reality of your apparition. That is the picture of a wretched ancestress of mine, of whose crimes a black and fearful catalogue is recorded in a family history in my charter-chest. The recital of them would be too horrible; it is enough to say, that in yon fatal apartment incest and unnatural murder were committed. I will restore it to the solitude to which the better judgment of those who preceded me had consigned it; and never shall any one, so long as I can prevent it, be exposed to a repetition of the supernatural horrors which could shake such courage as yours.'

Thus the friends, who had met with such glee, parted in a very different mood — Lord Woodville to command the Tapestried Chamber to be unmantled and the door built up; and General Browne to seek in some less beautiful country, and with some less dignified friend, forgetfulness of the painful night which he had passed in Woodville Castle.

DEATH OF THE LAIRD'S JOCK

DEATH OF THE LAIRD'S JOCK

THE manner in which this trifle was introduced at the time to Mr. F. M. Reynolds, editor of *The Keepsake* of 1828, leaves no occasion for a preface.

August 1831

TO THE EDITOR OF *THE KEEPSAKE*

You have asked me, sir, to point out a subject for the pencil, and I feel the difficulty of complying with your request, although I am not certainly unaccustomed to literary composition, or a total stranger to the stores of history and tradition, which afford the best copies for the painter's art. But although *sicut pictura poesis* is an ancient and undisputed axiom — although poetry and painting both address themselves to the same object of exciting the human imagination, by presenting to it pleasing or sublime images of ideal scenes; yet the one conveying itself through the ears to the understanding, and the other applying itself only to the eyes, the subjects which are best suited to the bard or tale-teller are often totally unfit for painting, where the artist must present in a single glance all that his art has power to tell us. The artist can neither recapitulate the past nor intimate the future. The single *now* is all which he can present; and hence, unquestionably, many subjects which delight us in poetry or in narrative, whether real or fictitious, cannot with advantage be transferred to the canvas.

Being in some degree aware of these difficulties, though doubtless unacquainted both with their extent and the means by which they may be modified or surmounted, I have, nevertheless, ventured to draw up the following traditional narrative as a story in which, when the general details are known, the interest is so much concentrated in one strong moment of

agonizing passion, that it can be understood and sympathised with at a single glance. I therefore presume that it may be acceptable as a hint to some one among the numerous artists who have of late years distinguished themselves as rearing up and supporting the British school.

Enough has been said and sung about

> The well-contested ground,
> The warlike border-land,

to render the habits of the tribes who inhabited them before the union of England and Scotland familiar to most of your readers. The rougher and sterner features of their character were softened by their attachment to the fine arts, from which has arisen the saying that, on the frontiers, every dale had its battle and every river its song. A rude species of chivalry was in constant use, and single combats were practised as the amusement of the few intervals of truce which suspended the exercise of war. The inveteracy of this custom may be inferred from the following incident.

Bernard Gilpin, the Apostle of the North, the first who undertook to preach the Protestant doctrines to the Border dalesmen, was surprised, on entering one of their churches, to see a gauntlet or mail-glove hanging above the altar. Upon inquiring the meaning of a symbol so indecorous being displayed in that sacred place, he was informed by the clerk, that the glove was that of a famous swordsman, who hung it there as an emblem of a general challenge and gage of battle to any who should dare to take the fatal token down. 'Reach it to me,' said the reverend churchman. The clerk and sexton equally declined the perilous office, and the good Bernard Gilpin was obliged to remove the glove with his own hands, desiring those who were present to inform the champion that he, and no other, had possessed himself of the gage of defiance. But the champion was as much ashamed to face Bernard Gilpin as the officials of the church had been to displace his pledge of combat.

The date of the following sto . is about the latter years of Q:een Elizabeth's reign ; and the events took place in Liddesdale, a hilly and pastoral district of Roxburghshire, which, on a part of its boundary, is divided from England only by a small river.

During the good old times of 'rugging and riving' (that is, tugging and tearing), under which term the disorderly doings of the warlike age are affectionately remembered, this valley was principally cultivated by the sept or clan of the Armstrongs.

The chief of this warlike race was the Laird of Mangerton. At the period of which I speak, the estate of Mangerton, with the power and dignity of chief, was possessed by John Armstrong, a man of great size, strength, and courage. While his father was alive, he was distinguished from others of his clan who bore the same name by the epithet of the Laird's Jock, that is to say, the Laird's son Jock, or Jack. This name he distinguished by so many bold and desperate achievements, that he retained it even after his father's death, and is mentioned under it both in authentic records and in tradition. Some of his feats are recorded in the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and others mentioned in contemporary chronicles.

At the species of singular combat which we have described, the Laird's Jock was unrivalled, and no champion of Cumberland, Westmoreland, or Northumberland could endure the sway of the huge two-handed sword which he wielded, and which few others could even lift. This 'awful sword,' as the common people term it, was as dear to him as Durindana or Fushberta to their respective masters, and was nearly as formidable to his enemies as those renowned falchions proved to the foes of Christendom. The weapon had been bequeathed to him by a celebrated English outlaw named Hobbie Noble, who, having committed some deed for which he was in danger from justice, fled to Liddesdale, and became a follower, or rather a brother-in-arms, to the renowned Laird's Jock; till, venturing into England with a small escort, a faithless guide, and with a light single-handed sword instead of his ponderous brand, Hobbie Noble, attacked by superior numbers, was made prisoner and executed.

With this weapon, and by means of his own strength and address, the Laird's Jock maintained the reputation of the best swordsman on the Border side, and defeated or slew many who ventured to dispute with him the formidable title.

But years pass on with the strong and the brave as with the feeble and the timid. In process of time, the Laird's Jock grew incapable of wielding his weapons, and finally of all active exertion, even of the most ordinary kind. The disabled champion became at length totally bedridden, and entirely dependent for his comfort on the pious duties of an only daughter, his perpetual attendant and companion.

Besides this dutiful child, the Laird's Jock had an only son, upon whom devolved the perilous task of leading the clan to battle, and maintaining the warlike renown of his native country, which was now disputed by the English upon many occasions.

The young Armstrong was active, brave, and strong, and brought home from dangerous adventures many tokens of decided success. Still the ancient chief conceived, as it would seem, that his son was scarce yet entitled by age and experience to be entrusted with the two-handed sword, by the use of which he had himself been so dreadfully distinguished.

At length, an English champion, one of the name of Foster, (if I rightly recollect), had the audacity to send a challenge to the best swordsman in Liddesdale; and young Armstrong, burning for chivalrous distinction, accepted the challenge.

The heart of the disabled old man swelled with joy when he heard that the challenge was passed and accepted, and the meeting fixed at a neutral spot, used as the place of rencontre upon such occasions, and which he himself had distinguished by numerous victories. He exulted so much in the conquest which he anticipated, that, to nerve his son to still bolder exertions, he conferred upon him, as champion of his clan and province, the celebrated weapon which he had hitherto retained in his own custody.

This was not all. When the day of combat arrived, the Laird's Jock, in spite of his daughter's affectionate remonstrances, determined, though he had not left his bed for two years, to be a personal witness of the duel. His will was still a law to his people, who bore him on their shoulders, wrapt in plaids and blankets, to the spot where the combat was to take place, and seated him on a fragment of rock, which is still called the Laird's Jock's stone. There he remained with eyes fixed on the lists or barrier within which the champions were about to meet. His daughter, having done all she could for his accommodation, stood motionless beside him, divided between anxiety for his health and for the event of the combat to her beloved brother. Ere yet the fight began, the old men gazed on their chief, now seen for the first time after several years, and sadly compared his altered features and wasted frame with the paragon of strength and manly beauty which they once remembered. The young men gazed on his large form and powerful make, as upon some antediluvian giant who had survived the destruction of the Flood.

But the sound of the trumpets on both sides recalled the attention of every one to the lists, surrounded as they were by numbers of both nations eager to witness the event of the day. The combatants met in the lists. It is needless to describe the struggle: the Scottish champion fell. Foster, placing his foot

on his antagonist, seized on the redoubted sword, so precious in the eyes of its aged owner, and brandished it over his head as a trophy of his conquest. The English shouted in triumph. But the despairing cry of the aged champion, who saw his country dishonoured, and his sword, long the terror of their race, in possession of an Englishman, was heard high above the acclamations of victory. He seemed, for an instant, animated by all his wonted power; for he started from the rock on which he sat, and while the garments with which he had been invested fell from his wasted frame, and showed the ruins of his strength, he tossed his arms wildly to heaven, and uttered a cry of indignation, horror, and despair, which, tradition says, was heard to a preternatural distance, and resembled the cry of a dying lion more than a human sound.

His friends received him in their arms as he sank utterly exhausted by the effort, and bore him back to his castle in mute sorrow; while his daughter at once wept for her brother and endeavoured to mitigate and soothe the despair of her father. But this was impossible: the old man's only tie to life was rent rudely asunder, and his heart had broken with it. The death of his son had no part in his sorrow: if he thought of him at all, it was as the degenerate boy through whom the honour of his country and clan had been lost, and he died in the course of three days, never even mentioning his name, but pouring out unintermitted lamentations for the loss of his noble sword.

I conceive, that the moment when the disabled chief was roused into a last exertion by the agony of the moment is favourable to the object of a painter. He might obtain the full advantage of contrasting the form of the rugged old man, in the extremity of furious despair, with the softness and beauty of the female form. The fatal field might be thrown into perspective, so as to give full effect to these two principal figures, and with the single explanation, that the piece represented a soldier beholding his son slain and the honour of his country lost, the picture would be sufficiently intelligible at the first glance. If it was thought necessary to show more clearly the nature of the conflict, it might be indicated by the pennon of St. George being displayed at one end of the lists, and that of St. Andrew at the other.

I remain, sir,

Your obedient servant,

THE AUTHOR OF *WAVERLEY*.

APPENDIX TO INTRODUCTION

TO

THE TALISMAN

WHILE warring in the Holy Land, Richard was seized with an ague. The best leeches of the camp were unable to effect the cure of the King's disease; but the prayers of the army were more successful. He became convalescent, and the first symptom of his recovery was a violent longing for pork. But pork was not likely to be plentiful in a country whose inhabitants had an abhorrence for swine's flesh; and

Though his men should be hanged
They ne might, in that countrèy,
For gold, ne silver, ne no money,
No pork find, take, ne get,
That King Richard might aught of eat.
An old knight with Richard biding,
When he heard of that tiding,
That the kingis wants were swyche,
To the steward he spake privyliche —
'Our lord the king sore is sick, I wis,
After porck he alonged is.
Ye may none find to selle.
No man be hardy him so to telle;
If he did he might die
Now behoves to done as I shall say,
Tho' he wete nought of that.
Take a Saracen, young and fat;
In haste let the thief be slain,
Opened, and his skin off flayn,
And sodden full hastily,
With powder and with spicery,
And with saffron of good colour.
When the king feels thereof savour,
Out of ague if he be went,
He shall have thereto good talènt.
When he has a good taste,
And eaten well a good repast,
And supped of the brewis a sup,
Slept after and swet a drop,
Through Goddis help and my counsail,
Soon he shall be fresh and hail.'
The sooth to say, at wordes few,
Slain and sodden was the heathen shrew.
Before the king it was forth brought:
Quod his men, 'Lord, we have pork sought;
Eates and suppes of the brewis soote,
Thorough grace of God it shall be your boot.'
Before King Richard carff a knight,

He ate faster than he carve might.
The king ate the flesh and gnew the bones,
And drank well after for the nones.
And when he had eaten enough,
His folk hem turned away, and lough.
He lay still and drew in his arm;
His chamberlain him wrapped warm.
He lay and slept, and swet a stound,
And became whole and sound.
King Richard clad him and arose,
And walked about in the close.

An attack of the Saracens was repelled by Richard in person, the consequence of which is told in the following lines:-

When King Richard had rested a whyle,
A knight his arms 'gan unlace,
Him to comfort and solace.
Him was brought a sop in wine.
'The head of that like swine,
That I of ate,' the cook he bade,
'For feeble I am, and faint and mad.
Of mine evil now I are fear;
Serve me therewith at my soupere.'
Quod the cook, 'That head I no have.'
Then said the king, 'So God me save,
But I see the head of that swine,
For sooth, thou shalt lesen thine.'
The cook saw none other might be;
He fet the head and let him see.
He fell on knees, and made a cry —
'Lo, here the head! my Lord, mercy!'

The cook had certainly some reason to fear that his master would be struck with horror at the recollection of the dreadful banquet to which he owed his recovery, but his fears were soon dissipated.

The swarte vis when the king seeth,
His black beard and white teeth,
How his lippes grinned wide,
'What devil is this?' the king cried,
And 'gan to laugh as he were wode.
'What! is Saracen's flesh thus good?
That, never erst I nought wist!
By Godes death and his uprist,
Shall we never die for default,
While we may in any assault,
Slee Saracens, the flesh may take,
And seethen and roasten and do hem bake,
[And] Gnawen her flesh to the bones!
Now I have it proved once,
For hunger ere I be wo,
I and my folk shall eat mo!'

The besieged now offered to surrender, upon conditions of safety to the inhabitants; while all the public treasure, military machines, and arms were delivered to the victors, together with the further ransom of one hundred thousand byzants. After this capitulation, the following extraordinary scene took place. We shall give it in the words of the humorous and amiable George Ellis, the collector and the editor of these romances:—

Though the garrison had faithfully performed the other articles of their contract, they were unable to restore the Cross, which was not in their possession, and were therefore treated by the Christians with great cruelty. Daily reports of their sufferings were carried to Saladin; and as many of them were persons of the highest distinction, that monarch, at the solicitation of their friends, dispatched an embassy to King Richard with magnificent presents, which he offered for the ransom of the captives. The ambassadors were persons the most respectable from their age, their rank, and their

eloquence. They deliv ed their message in terms of the utmost humility, and, without arraigning the justice c. the conqueror in his severe treatment of their countrymen, only solicited a period to that severity, laying at his feet the treasures with which they were intrusted, and pledging themselves and their master for the payment of any further sums which he might demand as the price of mercy.

King Richard spake with wordes mild,
'The gold to take, God me shield!
Among you partes every charge.
I brought, in shippes and in barge,
More gold and silver with me
Than has your lord, and swilke three.
To his treasure have I no need!
But for my love I you bid,
To meat with me that ye dwell;
And afterward I shall you tell.
Thorough counsel I shall you answèr,
What bode ye shall to your lord bear.'

The invitation was gratefully accepted. Richard, in the meantime, gave secret orders to his marshal that he should repair to the prison, select a certain number of the most istinguished captives, and, after carefully noting their names on a roll of parchment., cause their heads to be instantly struck off; that these heads should be delivered to the cook with instructions to clear away the hair, and, after boiling them in a caldron, to distribute them on several platters, one to each guest, observing to fasten on the forehead of each the piece of parchment expressing the name and family of the victim.

'An hot head bring me before,
As I were well apayed withall,
Eat thereof fast I shall,
As it were a tender chick,
To see how the others will like.'

This horrible order was punctually executed. At noon the guests were summoned to wash by the music of the waits; the King took his seat, attended by the principal officers of his court, at the high table, and the rest of the company were marshalled at a long table below him. On the cloth were placed portions of salt at the usual distances, but neither bread, wine, nor water. The ambassadors, rather surprised at this omission, but still free from apprehension, awaited in silence the arrival of the dinner, which was announced by the sound of pipes, trumpets, and tabours; and beheld, with horror and dismay, the unnatural banquet introduced by the steward and his officers. Yet their sentiments of disgust and abhorrence, and even their fears, were for a time suspended by their curiosity. Their eyes were fixed on the King, who, without the slightest change of countenance, swallowed the morsels as fast as they could be supplied by the knight who carved them.

Every man then poked other;
They said, 'This is the devil's brother,
That slays our men, and thus hem eats!'

Their attention was then involuntarily fixed on the smoking heads before them; they traced in the swollen and distorted features the resemblance of a friend or near relation, and received from the fatal scroll which accompanied each dish the sad assurance that this resemblance was not imaginary. They sat in torpid silence, anticipating their own fate in that of their countrymen, while their ferocious entertainer, with fury in his eyes, but with courtesy on his lips, insulted them by frequent invitations to merriment. At length this first course was removed, and its place supplied by venison, cranes, and other dainties, accompanied by the richest wines. The King then apologised to them for what had passed, which he attributed to his ignorance of their taste; and assured them of his religious respect for their character as ambassadors, and of his readiness to grant them a safe-conduct for their return. This boon was all that they now wished to claim; and

King Richard spake to an old man,
'Wendes home to your Soudan!
His melancholy that ye abate;
And sayes that ye came too late.
Too slowly was your time y-guessed;

Ere ye came, the flesh was dressed,
That men shoulden serve with me,
Thus at noon, and my meynie.
Say him, it shall him nought avail,
Though he for-bar us our vitail,
Bread, wine, fish, flesh, salmon, and conger;
Of us none shall die with hunger,
While we may wenden to fight,
And slay the Saracens downright,
Wash the flesh, and roast the head.
With oo Saracen I may well feed
Well a nine or a ten
Of my good Christian men.
King Richard shall warrant,
There is no flesh so nourissant
Unto an English man,
Partridge, plover, heron, ne swan,
Cow ne ox, sheep ne swine,
As the head of a Sarazyn.
There he is fat, and thereto tender,
And my men be lean and slender.
While any Saracen quick be,
Livand now in this Syrie,
For meat will we nothing care.
Abouten fast we shall fare,
And every day we shall eat
All so many as we may get.
To England will we nought gon,
Till they be eaten every one.'[1]

The reader may be curious to know owing to what circumstances so extraordinary an invention as that which imputed cannibalism to the King of England should have found its way into his history. Mr. [G. P. Rainsford] James, to whom we owe so much that is curious, seems to have traced the origin of this extraordinary rumour.

'With the army of the cross also was a multitude of men,' the same author [Guibert] declares, 'who made it a profession to be without money; they walked barefoot, carried no arms, and even preceded the beasts of burden in the march, living upon roots and herbs, and presenting a spectacle both disgusting and pitiable. A Norman, who according to all accounts was of noble birth, but who, having lost his horse, continued to follow as a foot soldier, took the strange resolution of putting himself at the head of this race of vagabonds, who willingly received him for their king. Amongst the Saracens these men became well known under the name of *Thafurs* (which Guibert translates *Trudentes*), and were held in great horror from the general persuasion that they fed on the dead bodies of their enemies — a report which was occasionally justified, and which the king of the Thafurs took care to encourage. This respectable monarch was frequently in the habit of stopping his followers, one by one, in any narrow defile, and of causing them to be searched carefully, lest the possession of the least sum of money should render them unworthy of the name of his subjects. If even two sous were found upon any one, he was instantly expelled the society of his tribe, the king bidding him contemptuously buy arms and fight.

'This troop, so far from being cumbersome to the army, was infinitely serviceable, carrying burdens, bringing in forage, provisions, and tribute, working the machines in the sieges, and, above all, spreading consternation among the Turks, who feared death [illegible] the lances of the knights less than that further consummation they heard of under the teeth of the Thafurs.'[2]

It is easy to conceive, that an ignorant minstrel, finding the taste and ferocity of the Thafurs commemorated in the historical accounts of the Holy wars, has ascribed their practices and propensities to the monarch of England, whose ferocity was considered as an object of exaggeration as legitimate as his valour.

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[1] Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Metrical Romances*, vol. ii. pp. 225–236.
[2] James's *History of Chivalry* [ed. 1830], p. 178.

NOTES

Note 1. — The Lee Penny, p. xii

At a meeting of the Scottish Society of Antiquaries (8th April 1861), an interesting communication 'On some Scottish Magical Charm-Stones, or Curing-Stones,' was read by the late Professor Sir James Y. Simpson, Bart., when the Lee Penny was among the articles exhibited. In his paper the eminent writer observes, that 'In the present century this ancient medical charm-stone has acquired a world-wide reputation as the original of the *Talisman* of Sir Walter Scott, though latterly its therapeutic reputation has greatly declined, and almost entirely ceased.' — See the *Proceedings*, vol. iv. p. 222 (*Laing*).

[Original later edition.] Since the last sheet of this volume was printed off, a kind friend has transmitted the following curious document, by which it would appear that the alleged virtues of the Lee Penny had at one time given uneasiness to our Presbyterian brethren of Clydesdale.

(Copy)

Extract from the Assemblie Books at Glasgow, anent the Lee Penny stone.

Apud Glasgow, 21 of October.[1]

Synod. Sess. 2

Quhilk day, amongest the referries of the Brethren of the Ministry of Lanark, it was proponed to the Synod that Gavin Hamilton of Raploch had pursuelt an Complaint before them against Sir James Lockhart of Lee, anent the superstitious using of an Stone, set in silver, for the curing of deseased Cattle, q^lk^ the said Gavin affirmed could not be lawfully usit, and that they had deferrit to give ony decisionne thairin till the advice of the Assemblie might be had concerning the same. The Assemblie having inquirit of the manner of using thereof, and particularly understood, be examination of the said Laird of Lee and otherwise, that the custom is only to cast the stone in some water, and give the deseasit Cattle thereof to drink, and that the same is done without using any words, such as Charmers and Sorcereirs use in thair unlawfull practices; and considering that in nature thair are many things seen to work strange effects, whereof no human wit can give a reason, it having pleast God to give to stones and herbs a speciall vertue for healing of many infirmities in man and beast, advises the Brethren to surcease thair process, as therein they perceive no ground of Offence, and admonishes the said Laird of Lee, in the using of the said stone, to

[1] The year is unfortunately not given; but the Sir James Lockhart named in the extract was born in 1596 and died in 1674.

take heid that it be usit hereafter with the least scandle that possibly maybe. Extract out of the Books of the Assemblie holden at Glasgow, and subscribed at thair command.

M. Robert Young, Clerk to the Assemblie at Glasgow.

Note 2. — Gab, Gaber, p. 11

This French word signified a sort of sport much used among the French chivalry, which consisted in vying with each other in making the most romantic gasconades. The verb and the meaning are retained in Scottish.

Note 3. — Giamschid, p. 29

[The legend is generally told thus: — Jamshid, a great and good king of Persia, grew proud in his old days and turned a terrible tyrant. The people, in despair, called in to their aid Zohak, a king who ruled on the western confines of Persia, and who had slain his own father (*not* of the house of Jamshid). Out of each shoulder of Zohak there grew a black serpent, which he fed on men's brains. The Persians found that Zohak was as great a tyrant as Jamshid, and at last a brave blacksmith, Kaweh by name, called all the people together in the market-place, put his leather apron on a spear, as a sort of banner, proclaimed a revolt against Zohak, and made Feridun, great-grandson of Jamshid, king over Persia in that king's stead.]

Note 4. — Hymn to Ahriman, p. 32

The worthy and learned clergyman by whom this species of hymn has been translated desires that, for fear of misconception, we should warn the reader to recollect that it is composed by a heathen, to whom the real causes of moral and physical evil are unknown, and who views their predominance in the system of the universe as all must view that appalling fact who have not the benefit of the Christian revelation. On our own part, we beg to add, that we understand the style of the translator is more paraphrastic than can be approved by those who are acquainted with the singularly curious original. The translator seems to have despaired of rendering into English verse the flights of Oriental poetry; and, possibly, like many learned and ingenious men, finding it impossible to discover the sense of the original, he may have tacitly substituted his own. The gentle and candid reader may believe this worthy and learned clergyman or not, as shall be most pleasing to himself.

Note 5. — Sir Thomas Multon of Gilsland, p. 69

He was a historical hero, faithfully attached, as is here expressed, to King Richard, and is noticed with distinction in the romance mentioned in the Introduction. At the beginning of the romance, mention is made of a tournament, in which the king returns three times with a fresh suit of armour, which acted as a disguise; and at each appearance some knight of great prowess had a sharp encounter with him. When Richard returned the second time, the following is Mr. Ellis's account of his proceedings: —

He now mounted a bay horse, assumed a suit of armour painted red, and a helmet, the crest of which was a red hound, with a long tail which reached to the earth — an emblem intended to convey his indignation against the heathen hounds who defiled the Holy Land, and his determination to attempt their destruction. Having sufficiently signalised himself in his new disguise, he rode into the ranks for the purpose of selecting a more formidable adversary; and, delivering his spear to his squire, took his mace

and assaulted Sir Thomas de Multon, a knight whose prowess was deservedly held in the highest estimation. Sir Thomas, apparently not at all disordered by a blow which would have felled a common adversary, calmly advised him to go and amuse himself elsewhere; but Richard having aimed at him a second and more violent stroke, by which his helmet was nearly crushed, he returned it with such vigour that the king lost his stirrups, and, recovering himself with some difficulty, rode off with all speed into the forest. — Ellis's *Specimens*, p. 187.

Note 6. — Assisses de Jerusalem, p. 109

The Assisses de Jerusalem were the digest of feudal law, composed by Godfrey of Boulogne, for the government of the Latin kingdom of Palestine, when reconquered from the Saracens. It was composed with advice of 'the patriarch and barons, of the clergy and laity,' and is, says the historian Gibbon, 'a precious monument of feudatory jurisprudence,' founded upon those principles of freedom which were essential to the system.

Note 7. — Proposal of Marriage, p. 153

This may appear so extraordinary and improbable a proposition, that it is necessary to say such a one was actually made. The historians, however, substitute the widowed Queen of Naples, sister of Richard, for the bride, and Saladin's brother for the bridegroom. They appear to have been ignorant of the existence of Edith of Plantagenet. — See Mill's *History of the Crusades*, vol. ii. p. 61.

Note 8. — Scots, Fause and False, p. 160

Such were the terms in which the English used to speak of their poor northern neighbours, forgetting that their own encroachments upon the independence of Scotland obliged the weaker nation to defend themselves by policy as well as force. The disgrace must be divided between Edward I. and III., who enforced their domination over a free country, and the Scots who were compelled to take compulsory oaths without any purpose of keeping them.

Note 9. — Montrose's Lines, p. 260

In this extract it has been pointed out that the Author, quoting from memory, committed originally a mistake by substituting in line first 'inconsistency,' and in line third repeating 'love,' with the still graver error of giving them as 'Montrose's Lines.' They bear such a striking resemblance to Montrose's 'New Ballad to the Tune of "I 'll never love thee more"' as to render this quite excusable. The true author was Richard Lovelace, in his collection, *Lucasta* (1649), in a song addressed to his mistress, of three stanzas, set to music, on his 'going to the wars.' The last stanza reads thus —

> Yet this inconstancy is such,
> As you too shall adore;
> I could not love thee, dear, so much,
> Lov'd I not honour more.

In like manner, Mr. Mark Napier, in his *Memoirs of Montrose*, complains of the quotation at the head of chap. xv. of *A Legend of Montrose*, but Sir Walter Scott only literally copied the words as published by Ritson in 1794 (*Laing*).

Note 10. — Sir Tristrem, p. 260

An universal tradition ascribed to Sir Tristrem, famous for his love of the fair Queen Yseult, the laws concerning the practice of woodcraft, or venerie, as it was called, being those that related to the rules of the chase, which were deemed of so much consequence during the Middle Ages.

Note 11. — Death of Grand Master, p. 310

The manner of the death of the supposed Grand Master of the Templars was taken from the real tragedy enacted by Saladin upon the person of Arnold or Reginald de Chatillon. This person, a soldier of fortune, had seized a castle on the verge of the desert, from whence he made plundering excursions, and insulted and abused the pilgrims who were on their journey to Mecca. It was chiefly on his account that Saladin declared war against Guy de Lusignan, the last Latin king of the Holy Land. The Christian monarch was defeated by Saladin with the loss of 30,000 men, and having been made prisoner, with Chatillon and others, was conducted before the Soldan. The victor presented to his exhausted captive a cup of sherbet, cooled in snow. Lusignan, having drank, was about to hand the cup to Chatillon, when the Soldan interfered. 'Your person,' he said, 'my royal prisoner, is sacred, but the cup of Saladin must not be profaned by a blasphemous robber and ruffian.' So saying, he slew the captive knight by a blow of his scimitar. — See Gibbon's *History*, xi. p. 129, ed. 1820.

Note 12. — MacRaes' Mutiny, p. 318

[In 1778 the 72d regiment of Highlanders (Seaforth's), consisting very largely of MacRaes, was quartered at Leith. There great dissatisfaction spread amongst the men as to the way they were treated, and when orders came to embark for service elsewhere, they refused to go on board; but marched up to Arthur's Seat and encamped there for several days. Certain noblemen and gentlemen, especially the Earl of Seaforth, Sir James Grant, and General Skene, at length persuaded the men to return to their duty, promising to see their grievances redressed, whereupon the regiment marched back, its band playing at its head, and embarked without further opposition.]

Note 13. — Woful Day beside Leith Pier, p. 318

[In April 1779 a draft of recruits belonging to the 42d (Black Watch) and 71st (Fraser's) regiments of Highlanders were sent down to Leith to be embarked for America, where the two regiments at that time were. A well-grounded rumour spread amongst these men that they were to be attached to two Lowland regiments (80th and 82d), although they had been expressly enlisted to serve in Highland attire and with Highlandmen. They remonstrated in respectful terms against the exchange, but refused to embark. A body of Fencibles was ordered down from Edinburgh Castle to arrest the mutineers. The Highlanders showed fight, and nearly forty men in all were killed and wounded in the strife.]

Note 14. — Robert Donn's Poems, p. 347

I cannot dismiss this story without resting attention for a moment on the light which has been thrown on the character of *The Highland Drover* since the time of its first appearance, by the account of a drover poet by

name Robert Mackay, or, as he was commonly called, Rob Donn, *i. e.* Brown Robert, and certain specimens of his talents, published in the 90th number of the *Quarterly Review*, July 1831. The picture which that paper gives of the habits and feelings of a class of persons with which the general reader would be apt to associate no ideas but those of wild superstition and rude manners is in the highest degree interesting; and I cannot resist the temptation of quoting two of the songs of this hitherto unheard-of poet of humble life. They are thus introduced by the reviewer: —

Upon one occasion, it seems, his [Rob's] attendance upon his first master's cattle business detained him a whole year from home, and at his return he found that a fair maiden, to whom his troth had been plighted of yore, had lost sight of her vows, and was on the eve of being married to a rival (a carpenter by trade), who had profited by the young drover's absence. The first song was composed during a sleepless night, in the neighbourhood of Crieff, in Perthshire, and the home-sickness which it expresses appears to be almost as much that of the deer-hunter as of the loving swain: —

Easy is my bed, it is easy,
But it is not to sleep that I incline;
The wind whistles northwards, northwards,
And my thoughts move with it.
More pleasant were it to be with thee
In the little glen of calves,
Than to be counting of droves
In the enclosures of Crieff.
Easy is my bed, etc.

Great is my esteem of the maiden,
Towards whose dwelling the north wind blows;
She is ever cheerful, sportive, kindly,
Without folly, without vanity, without pride.
True is her heart: were I under hiding,
And fifty men in pursuit of my footsteps,
I should find protection, when they surrounded me most closely,
In the secret recess of that shieling.
Easy is my bed, etc.

Oh for the day for turning my face homeward,
That I may see the maiden of beauty!
Joyful will it be to me to be with thee,
Fair girl with the long heavy locks!
Choice of all places for deer-hunting
Are the brindled rock and the ridge.
How sweet at evening to be dragging the slain deer
Downwards along the piper's cairn!
Easy is my bed, etc.

Great is my esteem of the maiden
Who parted from me by the west side of the enclosed field;
Late yet again will she linger in that fold,
Long after the kine are assembled.
It is I myself who have taken no dislike to thee,
Though far away from thee am I now.
It is for the thought of thee that sleep flies from me;
Great is the profit to me of thy parting kiss!
Easy is my bed, etc.

Dear to me are the boundaries of the forest;
Far from Crieff is my heart;
My remembrance is of the hillocks of sheep,
And the heath of many knolls.
Oh for the red-streaked fissures of the rock,
Where in spring time the fawns leap!
Oh for the crags towards which the wind is blowing —
Cheap would be my bed to be there!
Easy is my bed, etc.

The following describes Rob's feelings on the first discovery of his damsel's infidelity. The airs of both these pieces are his own, and, the Highland ladies say, very beautiful.

Heavy to me is the shieling, and the hum that is in it,
Since the ear that was wont to listen is no more on the watch.
Where is Isabel, the courteous, the conversable, a sister in kindness?
Where is Anne, the slender-browed, the turret-breasted, whose glossy hair pleased me when yet a boy?
Heich! what an hour was my returning!
Pain such as that sunset brought, what availeth me to tell it?

I traversed the fold, and upward among the trees —
Each place, far and near, wherein I was wont to salute my love.
When I looked down from the crag, and beheld the fair-haired stranger dallying with his bride,
I wished that I had never revisited the glen of my dreams.
Such [illegible]ings came into my heart as that sun was going down,
A pain of which I shall never be rid, what availeth me to tell it?

Since it hath been heard that the carpenter had persuaded thee,
My sleep is disturbed: busy is foolishness within me at midnight.
The kindness that has been between us, — I cannot shake off that memory in visions.
Thou callest me not to thy side; but love is to me for a messenger.
There is strife within me, and I toss to be at liberty;
And ever the closer it clings, and the delusion is growing to me as a tree.

Anne, yellow-haired daughter of Donald, surely thou knowest not how it is with me —
That it is old love, unrepaid, which has worn down from me my strength;
That when far from thee, beyond many mountains, the wound in my heart was throbbing,
Stirring, and searching for ever, as when I sat beside thee on the turf.
Now, then, hear me this once, if for ever I am to be without thee,
My spirit is broken — give me one kiss ere I leave this land.

Haughtily and scornfully the maid looked upon me;
Never will it be work for thy fingers to unloose the band from my curls;
Thou hast been absent a twelvemonth, and six were seeking me diligently;
Was thy superiority so high, that there should be no end of abiding for thee?
Ha! ha! ha! — hast thou at last become sick?
Is it love that is to give death to thee? surely the enemy has been in no haste.

But how shall I hate thee, even though towards me thou hast become cold?
When my discourse is most angry concerning thy name in thine absence,
Of a sudden thine image, with its old dearness, comes visibly into my mind;
And a secret voice whispers that love will yet prevail!
And I become surety for it anew, darling,
And it springs up at that hour lofty as a tower.

Rude and bald as these things appear in a verbal translation, and rough as they might possibly appear even were the originals intelligible, we confess we are disposed to think they would of themselves justify Dr. Mackay (their editor) in placing this herdsman-lover among the true sons of song.

GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

ABACUS, correctly, a frame with coloured beads strung on vertical wires. But here probably confounded with the thyrsus, the mystic staff of the phallic worshippers

ABOUTEN, about

ABUBEKER ALWAKEL (the Father of the Virgin, the Representative), or better. ABUBEKER AS-SADDIK (the Truthful), the father-in-law of Mohammed and his first successor (caliph)

ACCIPE HOC, take that

AFFLICTÆ SPONSÆ NE OBLIVISCARIS, forget not the bride in her tribulation

AHRIMAN. *See* Arimanes

AINSELL, ownself

ALAN, wolf-greyhound

ALI, the nephew and son-in-law of Mohammed, and fourth Caliph

ALLAH ACKBAR, God is victorious; ALLA HU, God is God; ALLAH KERIM, God is merciful

ALONGED IN, longeth for

ANASTASIUS, *or, Memoirs of a Greek written at the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (1819), a romance, by Thomas Hope, an art-collector and virtuoso

ANE, one

APAYED, pleased

ARAUN. ...E JEBUSITE, an allusion to 2 Samuel xxiv. 16

ARBLAST, a cross-bow

ARIMANES, or AHRIMAN, the Principle of Evil in Zoroaster's religion, the ancient religion of Persia

ARTHUR'S SEAT, the rocky mountain overlooking Edinburgh

ASTROLABE, a circular instrument for observing the stars

ASTUCIOUS, astute, cunning

ASTURIAS, a Christian kingdom of Spain (8th to 10th cent.; then united to Leon)

ATABAL, Arab kettle-drum

AULD, old

BAARENHAUTERS, more correctly BÄRENHÄUTER, meaning 'bear-skinners,' a nickname given to the *landsknechte*, or *lanzknechte*, of the 16th and 17th centuries in Germany, from their love of lying stretched indolently on bear-skin rugs

BAGNIO, a prison for slaves

BALIOL, MRS. BETHUNE. *See The Betrothed*, pp. 378, etc., and Note 13, p. 475

BALQUIDDER, or BALQUHIDDER, a district in the west of Perthshire, celebrated in Scottish song, and closely associated with Rob Roy

BALSORA, BASSORA, BUSSORAH, or BASRAH, formerly one of the great cities of the Orient, stands on the river Tigris-Euphrates, 60 or 70 miles from its mouth

BARB, a horse of Barbary (Morocco) breed

BARNS-BREAKING, larking, an idle frolic

BAYARD, BLIND. *See* Blind Bayard

BEAU GARÇON, beau, man of fashion

BEAU-SEANT, the black and white standard of the Knights Templars. *See Ivanhoe*, footnote, p. 115

BELLE AMIE, mistress

BENEDICTIO DOMINI, etc. (p. 90), the Lord's blessing be with thee!

BENEFIT OF CLERGY, the privilege claimed by one who could read, to escape the sentence, on his first conviction for certain offences; finally abolished in 1827

BENEVENT, or BENEVENTO, a city of Southern Italy

BICKERING, tremulous, crackling, spluttering

BIDE, to stop, stay

BIGGIN, a child's cap

BINK, a plate wall-rack

BLACKSMITH (p. 29). *See* Note 3, p. 416

BLEAR A PLAIN MAN'S EYE, blind him by flattery

BLIND BAYARD, the famous steed of Amadis of Gaul, afterwards belonged to the hero Rinaldo

BLINK, a glance, moment

BLONDEL, the favourite minstrel of Richard, who, according to the well-known legend, discovered his place of imprisonment in Germany

BODE, a message

BORAK OF THE PROPHET, a new sort of beast, with the face of a man, emeralds for eyes, and bright jewels in its wings, which, as Mohammed saw in a vision,

carried him through the air to the gate of Jerusalem

Borussia, the eastern parts of modern Prussia

Boswell, James, the author of the celebrated Life of Dr. Johnson

Brewis, broth

Brigandine, or **brigantine**, a coat of scale or plate armour

Brocrit, a cow with a black and white spotted face

Burgonet, a kind of helmet

Busk, dress up, arrange

Byzant, a gold coin = 10s. to £1, struck at Byzantium, and widely current in the Middle Ages

Caaba, Holy, the holiest temple in Mecca, the spot to which all Mohammedans long to make a pilgrimage, at least once, before they die; also a greatly venerated black stone in that temple

Caftan, a long vest with sleeves, worn under an outer coat, and fastened by a girdle round the waist

Caliph, the title of the successors of the Prophet Mohammed as political and religious head of the Moslem world

Callant, lad

Camel-driver of Mecca, Mohammed, who originally followed that calling

Camicia, or **camicia**, a large kind of shirt

Cangiar, or **canjiar**, a small two-edged Arab cutlass, a poniard

Cantrips, tricks, spells

Carcanet, a jewelled chain, necklace, collar

Carff, carved

Carline, old woman

Carolus, Charles, *i.e.* Charles I.; also the gold coin first struck in that king's reign, and worth 20s.

Carouse, a large draught of liquor

Carse, low alluvial land

Castrametation, the art of measuring and laying out a camp

Catheran, a Highland robber

Cattle, Scotch. *See* Highland droves

Cauld kail het again, cold cabbage heated up, a repetition, second dose

Chap, a customer, buyer

Chapps, a long riding cloak or mantle

Charbgites, more properly **Kharijis**, a puritanical sect or party of Islam, who originated in the 7th century

Charlie of Liddesdale. *See* Fighting Charlie, etc.

Chaude mêlée, the heat of the fight

Chios, an island off the west coast of Asia Minor

Christ Church, the college of that name at Oxford

Christenbury, or Christianbury, Crag, a hill in the east of Cumberland

Christian maiden brought Saracens into Spain (p. 278). Count Julian, a vassal of Roderick, king of the Goths, is said to have invited the Moors or Saracens over from Africa into Spain because the king had raviahed Florinda his daughter

Clachan, Highland hamlet

Clergy, benefit of. *See* Benefit of clergy

Coif, a small close-fitting head

Coil, noise, fuss, confusion

Confiteor, I confess it, I admit it

Consecrated bread, to swallow a piece was the ordeal imposed upon those accused of perjury

Constance, Lady, mother of Prince Arthur, in Shakespeare's *King John*, Act iii. sc. 4

Coptish. The Copts were the Christian descendants of the ancient Egyptians

Corby Castle. *See* Squire of Corby Castle

Costard, the head — a term of contempt

Cote, to outrun and get before

Cousin, kinsman, on p. 360 it means 'nephew'

Cox, contraction for cousin — a familiar term of address

Cranes, flight of. *See* Phalanx

Creagh, a cattle-lifting raid

Curtal, short

Cymar, a thin, almost transparent tissue

Cyprus, King of, Isaac Comnenus, a nephew of the reigning emperor of Byzantium (Constantinople), who was dethroned by Richard when on his way to Palestine

Daddles, hands

Damavend, a mountain in the north of Persia

Dandies, four. *See Guy Mannering*, Note 5, p. 428

Drasil, a circuit made in the direction of the sun's course

Denis Mountjoie, the war-cry of the French, in full form *Le Montjoie de St. Denis*, alluding to the hill (Montjoie) near Paris on which St. Denis suffered (joyful) martyrdom

Descant, a discourse

Despardieux, probably a stronger form of *Par Dieu!* By God

Dickon, a diminutive for Richard

Dinayet, or Dunnyat, a prominent hill 3 miles north-east of Stirling

Discipline, a scourge

Divan, a council

Doch-an-dorroch, a parting-cup

Doddy, an ox or cow without horns

Dog, duel betwixt man and. *See* Duel, etc.

Dort, a Dutch coin = ½ penny

Donn, Rob, was born at Durness in the country of Lord Reay (Sutherlandshire), the head of the clan MacKay, in 1714, was cow-keeper, not cow-herd, to his chief, wrote poems and satires, and died in 1778

Doune Fair, held at Doune, about 9 miles north-west of Stirling, early in each November

Dour, stubborn, sulky

Dromond, a large ship or transport vessel

Droves, Highland. *See* Highland droves

Dudgeon-dagger, a dagger with a boxwood haft

Duel betwixt man and dog (p. 255), no doubt the fight between the 'dog of Montargis' and the murderer of the animal's master, which took place, however, in 1371. *See The World*, No. 113

Dunnie-wassel, a Highland gentleman

Durindana, the sword of Orlando in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*

Easy, Sir Charles, a character in Colley Cibber's comedy, *The Careless Husband* (1705)

Eblis, chief of the jinn, or evil spirits of Mohammedan belief, who was cast out of Paradise by Allah (God) because he refused to worship Adam

Egypt and Syria, King of, Saladin, who, whilst lieutenant for Nureddin, emir of Damascus, conquered Egypt (1170-71)

Een, also, likewise

Eld, elders, old men

El Hakim, means 'the physician'

Elias, our founder (p. 176), according to an old legend, the Carmelite order was founded by Elijah (Elias) the prophet, who was so closely associated with Mount Carmel

Elritch, or **Eldritch**, weird, wild, strange

Emir, an independent prince, or the governor of a province

Engaddi, or **Engedi**, on the west shore of the Dead Sea

Enow, enough, several

Erst, before

Fakir, a Hindu ascetic or mendicant

Falconbridge, in Shakespeare's *King John*

Famagosta, a seaport on the east side of Cyprus, and capital of Isaac, the king whom Richard deposed on his way to the Holy Land

Fancies and Good-nights (p. 318), the titles of little poems

Faun, a Roman rustic divinity, with short horns, pointed ears, a goat's tail, and cloven feet

Fause, false, deceitful

Freders, backers, encouragers

Feriatur leo, let the lion be struck down

Feridoun, or **Feridun**. *See* Note 3, p. 416

Fet, fetched

Fighting Charlie of Liddesdale, an Elliot or an Armstrong, a well-known character in the Border frays towards the end of the 18th century. *See Guy Mannering*, Note 2, p. 425

Flayn, flayed

Forbar, deny, refuse

Fords of Frew, in the river Forth, near Kippen in Stirlingshire

Four Dandies of Lustruther. *See Guy Mannering*, Note 5, p. 428

Franguistan, the country of the Franks, *i. e.* Europe

Frank, the name given by Orientals to the peoples of Western Europe

Freat, or freit, superstitious notion, practice

Front-stall, the piece of armour that protected a horse's face

Fusberta, or Fusberta, the sword of Rinaldo in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*

Fytte, or **fit**, a song, story in verse

Gabber, to vie in telling marvellous stories *à la* Munchhausen

Gaie science, the art of the minstrel or troubadour

Gainstander, one who withstands

Galen, a celebrated ancient Greek physician of the 2d century A. D.

Galloway nag, a strong Scotch cob, originally bred in the old county of Galloway

Gar, to make, oblige

Gate, way, manner, path

Gaze-hound, a hound that pursues by sight rather than by scent, a greyhound

Gear, business, affair

Genii (pl.), the jinn or evil spirits of Moslem belief

Gittern, or **gitten**, a stringed instrument of music resembling a guitar

Giaougi, or **Gyges**, a Lydian king, who possessed a ring which, when he wore it, rendered him invisible

Giaour, a contemptuous term applied by Mohammedans to all non-Mohammedans

Gillie-whitefoot, or **gillie-whit**, a messenger

Gilpin, Bernard, this Pastor Oberlin of the North of England, a brave, good, and large-hearted man, lived from 1517 to 1583

Gin, if

Ginnistan, the mythical land of the jinn or evil spirits

Glenae, in Dumfriesshire

Gloria Patri, Glory to the Father

Glunamie, or **glunnie**, a rough, unpolished Highlander

Gnew, gnawed

Godfrey (p. 189), or **Godfrey of Bouillon**, leader of the first Crusade, declined the crown of Jerusalem, after the capture of the Holy City in 1099, on the plea that he could not wear a crown of gold where his Master had worn one of thorns

Gramaryn, magic or necromancy

Greyhound, silver, or sleeve. *See* Silver greyhound, etc.

Guy, King of Jerusalem, Guy of Lusignan, chosen king of Jerusalem in 1186

Hadgi, or **Hajji**, a Mohammedan who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca

Hadji Baba, two romances entitled *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* (1824), and *Hajji Baba in England* (1828), by James Morier

Haggis, sheep's liver, heart, etc., minced fine and boiled in a bag with oatmeal, suet, etc.

Haik, a kind of shawl or cloak

Hallowe'en spells. *See* Burns's poem, *Hallowe'en*

Hamako, a person touched with insanity

Harmonica, a musical toy in which notes were produced in and from small metallic reeds or tubes placed in a frame and played by breathing into them

Haroun, Aaron, the brother of Moses

Hegira, or **Hejra**, Mohammed's flight from Mecca on 13th September 622

Helvoet, or **Hellevoetsluis**, a seaport and fortress, about 17 miles from Rotterdam

Hem, them

Henry the Stern, the Emperor Henry VI.

Hie, high, noble

Highland droves (of cattle), were sold at St. Faith's Fair near Norwich and thence made their

way to London. The recollection of these droves of Scotch cattle passing through Lincolnshire is not yet (1894) wholly extinct in the fens

HIPPOCRATES, perhaps the most celebrated of the ancient Greek physicians, lived in the 5th and 4th centuries B. C.

HOBBIE NOBLE. *See* the ballad in *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. ii.

HOCH LEBE DER HERZOG LEOPOLD, Long live Duke Leopold!

HOFNARR, more correctly HOFNARR, court jester

HOGGED, with the hair clipped short

HOLLAN, holly

HOMAGE (SCOTTISH) TO ENGLAND (p. 97), extorted from William the Lion of Scotland, after he was captured at Alnwick by the men of Yorkshire in 1174

HOOLY AND FAIRLY, softly and fairly, gently

HOURIS, the beautiful damsels that are to wait upon faithful Mohammedans in Paradise

ILKE, the same

IMAUM, the official who recites the prayers in a mosque, and leads the worshippers in their devotions

IN ARTICULO MORTIS, at the point of death

IN PARI CASU, in the same condition, on the same terms

IRAK, Persia, more properly a (western) province of that country

ISTHME, a river of Cumberland

ISAACK, a celebrated Arab musician, who lived in the reigns of the Caliph Haroun ar-Rashid and his son Al-Mamun

ISSA BEN MARIAM, Jesus, the son of Mary

ISTAKHAR, an ancient city of southern Persia, near the still older Persepolis, and the capital of the Sassanian dynasty of Persian kings

JERID, or JEREED, a wooden javelin, five feet long, used in mimic combats

JERUSALEM, DEPOSED QUEEN OF, Sybilla, sister and second successor of Baldwin IV., king of Jerusalem, who, when she married Guy of Lusignan in 1186, resigned her crown to him

JERUSALEM, LATIN KINGDOM OF, founded by the chiefs of the first Crusade in 1099, destroyed by the Turkish Charismians in 1244

JONGLEUR, travelling minstrel who frequented tournaments, castles, and popular festivals

JOYEUSE SCIENCE, art of minstrelsy

JURE DIVINO, by divine right

JUSTICE SHALLOW, in *Henry IV.*, Part II., Act iii. sc. 2, Falstaff describes Shallow. *Fancies and Good-nights* (p. 318), the titles of little poems

KAISER, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire

KEBLA, the point towards which Mohammedans turn when they pray, *i. e.* Mecca

KEN, to know

KENNING, measurable distance, cognizance

KHIRKAH, a dervish's habit or robe

KYLOES, Highland black cattle

LAI, a short lyric, song, lay

LANCKENECHTS, LANDSKNECHTE, OR LANSKNECHTE, mercenary soldiers armed with pikes and swords, and first organised by the Emperor Maximilian in 1487

LANERCOST, a celebrated Augustinian priory, some 16 miles north-east of Carlisle

LEABHAR-DHU, a black pocket-book

LEASING, fibbing, telling falsehoods

LELIEL, a corruption of the Arab war-cry, '*La ilaha illa 'llah*,' *i. e.* There is no god but God

LEON, a Christian kingdom of Spain (10th to 13th cent.)

LEOPOLD, GRAND DUKE OF AUSTRIA (p. 115). It was his father Henry, not Leopold himself, who was made 'duke,' and by Frederick I., not Henry the Stern

LIBBARD, leopard

LINGUA FRANCA, a language that is used as a common medium of communication

LIVAND, living

LIOU, a calf

LOCHABER, a district in the south of Inverness-shire

LOCHERBY, or LOCHERBEN, a parish in Dumfriesshire

LOGAN, JOHN, Scottish poet (1748-1788), author of the *Braes of Yarrow*

LOKMAN, a mythical personage, variously identified as Balaam, as Job's nephew or grandson, as a Nubian contemporary of David, and the traditionary author of a collection of Arabic fables

LOMBARDY PEDLARS. The people of the Italian cities of Lombardy were famous traders to all parts of Europe in the times of the Crusades

LOON, a fellow, rogue

LORD OF SPEECH, the tongue

LOS, *i. e. laus*, praise, renown

LOUGH, laughed

LOUTED, bent, inclined

LOVELACE, the hero of Richardson's novel, *Clarissa Harlowe* (1749)

LOWER EMPIRE, the Eastern, Byzantine, or Greek empire

LYME-HOUND, a dog held in a leam or strap, a bear-hound

MAGI, the priests of the religion of Zoroaster; they practised divination and magic

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PRÆVALEBIT, Truth is great and it will prevail

MAHOUND, a contemptuous name for Mahomet, represented as a devil in the mediæval mystery plays of Europe

MAIN, a match at cock-fighting

MANGONEL, a large catapult for hurling stones

MANSOUR, the pen-name of Firdousi, the great Persian poet (940-1020)

MARABOUT, a Mohammedan ascetic or saint, especially in North Africa

Maravedi, a copper coin of Portugal = $\frac{1}{4}$ penny
Marcat, market
March parts, the borders of England and Scotland, or the marches
Marmoset, a conceited puppy
Maronites, an ancient Christian sect of Syria
Martlemas, or **Martinmas**, the 11th November, at which season it was formerly the custom to slaughter fat cattle and salt the beef for winter use
Maugis, a knight skilled in magic, the hero of the mediæval romance, *Maugis l'Aygremont*
Maun, must
Mazer, a large wooden drinking-bowl, mounted with silver
M : a culpa, the fault is mine, I am to blame
Melech Ric, King Richard
Memento mori, remember, you must die
Menus plaisirs, little pleasures
Merlin, the magician in the stories of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table
Meynie, retinue, household
Mill, show him the. *See* show him the mill
Minch Moor, between the Yarrow and the Tweed, on the borders of Selkirkshire and Peeblesshire
Minnesinger, the love-poets and minstrels of mediæval Germany
Miraelif (the water-drinker). *See* Weber's *Tales of the East*, vol. iii. p. 556
Mo, more
Moderamen inculpatæ tutelæ, mitigating circumstances in behalf of the accused
Moderator of the Assembly, the president or chairman of the General Assembly of the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland
Mohammed Mohadi. *See* Twelfth imaum
Mollahs, the Mohammedan clergy, who interpret the Koran
Monotroch, a one-wheeled car or vehicle
Montserrat, or Monte serrato, a serrated or saw-edged mountain. This name is given to a fantastically-shaped mountain, 30 miles from Barcelona in Spain. The real Marquis's name was Montferrat, and he was of Italian descent
Moor, Moorish, taken, incorrectly, as synonymous with Arab, Turk, Saracen (*q. v.*)
Morning, an early dram
Mortier, a steel morion or soldier's cap
Moslem, Moslems or Muhammadans
Moussa ben Amran, Moses, the son of Amran. The allusion on p. 183 is to Numbers xx. 11
Muezzin, the officer of a mosque who proclaims the hours of prayer from the highest stage of the minaret or tower
Mumme, or more correctly **muime**, foster-mother, nurse
Mumpsimus and sumpsimus. According to Richard Pace, secretary to Henry VIII., in his *De Fructu Doctrinæ* (p. 80, ed. 1517), an old priest habitually read in his (Latin) breviary *mumpsimus* in mistake for *sumpsimus*; and when the error was pointed out to him, he refused to change his old way of 'pronunciation,' that he had been accustomed to for thirty years, for 'your new-fashioned' way
Murrey-coloured, mulberry or dark red

Nae, no
Nailer, tip him the. *See* Tip him the nailer
Nazarene, a term applied in contempt to the early Christians, as followers of Jesus of Nazareth
Ne, not, nor
Niersenstein, a Rhine wine grown at Nierenstein, 10 miles south of Mainz
Noonings, a repast at noon
Nourissant, nourishing

Old Man of the Mountain, the head of the Mohammedan sect of the Ishmaelites or Assassins, who practised political assassination as part of their religious creed. He lived on the mountain of Alamut in Persia
Omrah, court officer, strictly the title of the twenty-four councillors of the Great Mogul (emperor) of Delhi
On, one
Oop zee zo (quoth the Dutchman), may be meant for the Dutch equivalent of 'Up it goes!' or more probably is a corruption of 'upsee Dutch,' a kind of strong Dutch ale
Oriflamme, the sacred banner of France
Orthez, between Pau and Bayonne in the south of France
Orvietan, an antidote to poison, said to have been first compounded at Orvieto in Spain
Otium, ease, leisure
Oui, yes; this word was used in the north of France, in contradistinction to *oc* (yes), employed in the south of France
Over-scutched, probably over-switched, over-whipped. *See Henry IV.*, Part II., Act iii. sc. 2

Panel, the accused, prisoner at the bar
Par amours, for love (illicit)
Partes, divide, share amongst
Par voie du fait, by a duel, by violence
Passant, walking — a term in heraldry
Pavesse, or pavise, a large triangular shield, covering the entire person
Paynim, pagan; **paynimrie**, heathendom
Pe gang, still go on
Pennoncelle, a small flag at the end of a spear
Perdu, hidden, concealed
Periapt, an amulet, charm
Phalanx (of cranes). These birds usually fly in a wedge-shaped body, a single bird leading the way, closely followed by two others, and they by three more, and so on. *Compare* Schiller's *Kraniche des Ibykus*
Pickthank, an officious and ungrateful person, a busybody

Pilaw, a dish of mutton, kid, or fowl, boiled with rice, butter, and spices
Poet Laureate, Southey, who wrote *Thalaba* (1801)
Pouncet-box, a box to hold perfumes
Preceptories, religious houses of the Templars
Prester John, a mythical Christian priest-king ruling somewhere in the far east of Asia, later identified with the Christian king of Abyssinia
Pretty man, a stout, brave fellow
Prix juste, fair price
Professors of the fancy, professional pugilists
Promethean, according to one version of the legend made men out of clay and water
Prôné, extolled, cried up
Provéditore, a high officer of state of Venice

Quean, a hussy
Quod, quoth, said
Quod erat demonstrandum, which was to be proved
Quotha, forsooth

Raff, a worthless fellow
Rashid, an observatory
Red-hot globe of iron, was carried a certain distance as an ordeal to determine guilt or innocence
Rood, a cross, crucifix
Rote, a stringed instrument played by turning a wheel
Rudas, rough, rude
Rudpiki, probably a slip for Rudiki, a poet who lived at the court of Bokhara and Samarcand, in the 10th century. The sentiment in the text (p. 27) was, however, uttered by the great Persian poet Hafiz
Rueing and riving, tugging and tearing, *i. e.* the wild doings of Border life
Runt, a young ox or cow
Rustan, or **Rustem**, the traditionary hero of Persia, was a brave and a faithful general

Sacque, a kind of lady's gown, with a long loose back depending from the collar
St. Lucia, an island in the West Indies
St. Mungo, also **St. Kentigern**, was guided by two untamed bulls to Glasgow, which he made the head of his see
St. Ninian, this old Scottish saint's shrine was at Whithorn (*Candida Casa*) in Wigtownshire, and was long a famous pilgrimage
Sair news, bad news
Saladin, a Turk (p. 166). Saladin was by birth a Kurd, but he ruled the Turks of Asia Minor, who were the most inveterate foes of the Crusaders
Salam alicum, Peace be with you, the usual Mohammedan greeting
Samite, a special kind of gold cloth
Santon, a Moslem saint
Saracen, is not, correctly, the name of a nation, but the common designation which the Crusaders gave to all their Moslem enemies
Saracens brought into Spain (p. 278). *See* Christian maiden, etc.
Sarbacane, tube for blowing small poisoned darts through, blow-gun
Sathanas, Satan, devil
Sawney, or Sandy, a general nickname for a Scotsman
Scheik. *See* Old Man of the Mountain
Schiraz, an ancient and renowned city of Persia
Scotch cattle. *See* Highland droves
Scrub, in George Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem* (1707), Act iii. sc. 1
Secret, a shirt of mail worn under the armour
Seljook, or **Seljuk**, the name, properly, of a ruling dynasty of the Turks, who are by race quite distinct from the Kurds. Saladin's father was a provincial governor under the Seljuk rulers
Selt, sold
Seven oceans, according to Arab geographers, there are seven earths
Seward, Miss Anna, called 'the Swan of Lichfield,' a poetess and blue-stocking, who corresponded with Scott
Shag, stuff of coarse cloth or rough hair
Shalm, or shawm, a kind of clarinet or hautboy
Shebbeddin, or **Shirkoh**, the name of Saladin's uncle, and a Kurd by race
Shieling, a Highland hut
Show him the hill, begin the (prize) fight
Sic itur ad astra, This is the path to heaven, the motto attached to the armorial bearings of the Canongate, Edinburgh
Sicut pictura poesis, painting has something in common with poetry
Siddim, valley of, where Sodom and Gomorrah formerly stood, now in great part covered by the Dead Sea
Sillermills, or Silvermills, now a northern suburb of Edinburgh
Silvan, silvan or rural divinity
Silver greyhound on the sleeve, the badge of the king's messenger or warrant-officer
Simoom, a hot, suffocating wind that blows in the deserts of Africa and Arabia
Skene-dhu, a black knife or dirk
Slee, slay
Slot, track, footprints
Smithfield (keep the rounds at), show endurance in a prize-fight, presumably during the great St. Bartholomew Fair, held at Smithfield in September every year
Snebbing, snuff
Snuff-mull, snuff-box
Soldan, or soudan, sultan
Solimaun ben Daoud, Solomon, the son of David
Soote, sweet
Spaewife, fortune-teller
Spain, Saracens brought into (p. 278). *See* Christian maiden, etc.
Spectral huntsman, in the poem *Theodore and Honoria*, translated by Dryden from the Italian of Boccaccio
Speech, lord of, the tongue
Spiogs, legs
Sporran, Highlander's pouch of goat-skin, used as a purse

Strack, lively
Sumsomancher, sayer of sayings
Sayres of Corby Castle, a Howard. Corby Castle stands 4 miles east of Carlisle
Stagshaw Bank, 4 miles from Hexham, and close to the Roman Wall, where a much-frequented fair was held
Stair, Earl of, the second earl fought under Marlborough in Flanders from 1702 to 1709
Standard, battle of the, fought near Northallerton in Yorkshire, between the English and the Scotch led by David I. in 1138, the latter suffering defeat
Stanwix, a village immediately north of Carlisle
Start and owerloup, to break away and leap the roadside fences
Stoop, swoop of a falcon
Stot, a bullock
Stound, a short while
Stradiots, or Stratiots, light cavalry recruited by Venice in Albania and Morea (Greece)
Styptic, a medicine to check the flow of blood from a wound
Summat, something
Sumpsimus. *See* Mumpsimus, etc.
Supple, or souple, a stout cudgel
Surcoat, a long loose garment worn over armour
Swarth, black, swarthy
Swilke, of such like, of that kind
Swyche, such

Tabard, a long tunic or upper cloak
Tabour, a kind of kettle-drum
Tabouret, a low seat without arms or back; a tabour, *i.e.* a musical instrument
Taibhsearagh, the gift of second sight
Tarriance, delay
Tecbir, the formula *Allah akbar* (God is great), the Arab war-cry
Tent (a wound), to examine or probe
Termagaunt, an Oriental spirit of violent and tumultuous behaviour, represented as a devil in the mediæval mystery plays of Europe
Teutonic Knights, a religious, military order, founded in Palestine in 1190 (1192), but from 1225 to 1386 engaged in fighting the heathen Prussians and Lithuanians, and still (1891) in existence as an (aristocratic) secular order, with branches in Vienna and Utrecht
Thalaba, by Southey, who was poet laureate, 1813 to 1843
'The horrid plough,' etc. (p. 354), from Logan's poem, *A Tale*, but somewhat altered
Theodore, in the poem *Theodore and Honoria*, translated by Dryden from the Italian of Boccaccio
Tilburina, the extravagantly love-lorn maid in Sheridan's *Critic* (1779)
Tip him the nailer, give him the finishing blow
Tishbite, Elijah the prophet
Tolpacd, a Tartar hat made of black lamb's-wool
Tomahourich. *Compare* Tomnahurich, or the Hill of the Fairies, near Inverness
Tophet, or **Topheth**, a valley near Jerusalem, where the filth and sewage of the city were deposited and burnt
Topsman, head drover
Toy, a trifle, means of diversion
Trained, enticed away by a trick or stratagem
Traquair, on the Tweed, in Peeblesshire
Trouveur, poets of chivalry in Northern France
Tryste, a fair
Tuck (of drum), beat
Turks, regarded in this novel as synonymous with Saracens
Twelfth Imaum, or caliph, named Mohammed, disappeared when only twelve years of age. The Mohammedans expect him to return some day, to inaugurate a reign of peace and happiness. This expected prophet is called the Mahdi (Mohadi)
Tyke, a cur, ill-bred dog
Tyned, lost

Ulemat, a Moslem ecclesiastic of high rank
Untented (conscience), one the pain of which is not lessened

Venerie, the chase
Venetian shippers. The Venetians made great gains by shipping the Crusaders and their supplies to the East
Vera cruz, the true cross
Vert, a game forest
Vis, face, visage
Vis major, stronger force

Wae's me, woe is me
Waits, hautboys, oboes
Wanchancy, unlucky, dangerous
Warlock, a wizard
Water-drinker Mirelip. *See* Mirglip
Wete, knoweth
Wheen mair, a few more
Whitson Tryste, a Whitsuntide fair held near Wooler in Northumberland, 20 miles from Berwick-on-Tweed
Widdersins, contrary direction to the sun's course
Willielmus, William, *i.e.* William III.
Wimple, a veil or hood
Winna. *See* Wunna
Wo, undone, in distress
Wode, or **wud**, beside himself, insane
Woodcock of my side, that's a point scored to folly. *Woodcock* was a synonym for a foolish man, a simpleton
Wooler Fair, probably the fair held at Whitsunbank Hill, 2 miles from Wooler. *See also* Whitson Tryste
Wrest, a key for tuning a harp
Wunna, winna, will not

Yacoun, or Zakum, in Mohammedan faith, a tree of the infernal

regions, that produces heads of demons instead of fruit

YEMEN, the most southerly province of Arabia

YEZED BEN SOPHIAN, one of the Arab generals sent to conquer Syria, though the real head of the invading army was Khalid (the sword of the Lord)

YSOP, or Æsop, the fable-teller, is traditionally said to have been deformed and a monster of ugliness

YSOUF BEN YACOUBE, Joseph, the son of (the patriarch) Jacob

ZABLESTAN, or ZABULISTAN, is Ghazni, in modern Afghanistan

ZECHIN, or SEQUINO, sequin, a gold coin of Venice worth about 9s. 4d.

ZENANA, the woman's apartments in an Oriental house

ZOHAUK, or ZOHAK. *See* Note 3, p. 416

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